

































# THE METROPOLITES;

OR,

## KNOW THY NEIGHBOR.

A Novel.

BY

ROBERT ST. CLAR.

"'Tis an old tale and often told,  
But did my fate and wish agree,  
Ne'er had been read in story old,  
Of maiden true betrayed for gold,  
That loved, or was avenged like me."

MARMION.



---

NEW YORK:

AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY.

121 NASSAU STREET.

1864.

✓

No. 1.



PZ3  
S.136 M

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1864, by

AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY,

in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern  
District of New York.

---

R. CRAIGHEAD,

Printer, Stereotyper, and Electrotyper,

Carton Building.

81, 83, and 85 Centre Street.



# THE METROPOLITES.

---

## CHAPTER I.

ON a bright morning in winter, two young lawyers were seated in a Wall street office, in New York. The sun sent its genial rays through the windows, and the young men were gaily talking on various topics—more suitable, however, for a club-room. At length one of them arose to take his departure.

“Wait a moment,” said his companion. “I will go down street with you whenever Tunc makes his appearance.”

“What is keeping the boy so late?” asked the other, resuming his seat.

“I don’t know, Harry, unless he is in search of his father, in which event we will not see him again, if he intends bringing his affectionate parent along with him.” Such was the answer of the loquacious Walter Parker, shaking back his long, black hair, and throwing his large, dark eyes upon Harry Chester.

“Have you no knowledge of his relatives, beyond the simple statement made at the time he was taken into the office by your uncle?”

“No statement at all was made beyond the fact that he



has no father, and never had; at least no one would acknowledge the paternity."

"How, then, about his mother?"

"The female sex, you know, Harry, are famed for their modesty, and in this instance, perhaps, have wisely kept silence."

"Then the boy is without father and mother."

"That is the natural presumption in such cases, with the saving clause that he possessed at one time those incumbrances, and may still have them, if not gone to Greenwood cemetery, or some other such steamboat landing, from whence no return trip is ever expected. The enterprising spiritualists, however, are about establishing an air line to accommodate passengers wanting to come back—a speculation that will undoubtedly pay somebody."

"But you know the name of the boy."

"Certainly, we know the name given to him, not in baptism, but when brought here by the woman who had the long private confab in the other room with the senior counsellor of this establishment. He was called Nathan P. Trenk, which N. P. T. stands for *nunc pro tunc*, in legal stenography. Tunc is more professional than Trenk, hence the change."

"The 'senior counsellor,' as you call your uncle, might enlighten you as to the boy's antecedents."

"Well, I did inquire," said Parker, "but he was extremely costive on the topic. He gave me, moreover, a metaphorical rap for my curiosity. Whereupon, I promptly apologized on the spot, declaring I did not mean to suggest he had any private reasons of his own for hushing up the matter."

"How did he relish the insinuation?"

"As well as might be expected. He said nothing, but



went off with the conviction that pouring acids on my angelic temper was not the way to make things palatable. However, it settled the hash, as vinegar will settle hash; for it put an end to all further remarks about Tunc. I believe the old Governor would have told me all had I been less precipitate in my conclusions. But, pursuing some private researches in the case, I have arrived at some satisfactory results."

"What are they?—pray tell me," said Chester, laughing.

Walter Parker placed his legs upon the table, and, interlocking his fingers over the top of his head, threw himself back in his chair, with the intention to make a clean breast of it or to mystify his companion, and thus slowly began:

"I am satisfied that Tunc first saw the lights of heaven and of the Highlands of Nevesink at the same time; for his native soil is Coney Island—if sand, surf, and sea-weed can be called soil. It was near that classic shore the *Jung Frau* fell to pieces. I mean the German immigrant ship of that name. And about the same date, in the most approved almanacs, Tunc presented himself on the beach, with no more clothes than a sand-piper, nor much larger than one of those diminutive bipeds. Had he made his first appearance in public as an infant phenomenon in the days of yore, on the isles of Greece, perhaps his advent would have been announced in the largest curb-stone handbills as a stray olive branch from Olympus. But the fates having otherwise ordered, his arrival was anticipated by our people, who imitate the ancients when it is possible; who call their cities after those of antiquity; who name their children after the iron-clad heroes of Homer, without steam boilers; who invent words of Argive polysyllables for every new machine; and who, in this street, are Greeks to all intents and purposes."



"But what has all this to do with the boy?" asked Chester.

"Don't interrupt the court, if you please. Now the legend goes on to state that such infant phenomenon being expected from accidents to *Jung Fraus*, the public had made suitable provision for their reception. So soon as this incident happened, messengers were sent up into the country among the natives to the capital of the empire, where dwelt the supreme officers of state. At the time a regency flourished, as the sovereign, Vox Populi, was in his minority; at least they said he was in a minority, as his father, Vox Dei, had subsided some time before into keeping a lager-bier saloon. As I was saying, a regency, composed of wise men, administered the government with great prudence and great profit, inasmuch as they were in continual fear of having their heads chopped off. It is said they were willing to shed their blood for Vox Populi, and it is well known they made their friends bleed pretty freely, which shows they were impartial. In fact phlebotomy was almost played out, for they were constantly putting up posters about their 'bleeding country.' This was a periodical sacrifice to the sovereign, Vox Populi, till the annual autumnal plague was abated. But this is all beside the record."

Here Harry Chester became somewhat impatient, which his loquacious friend perceiving, went on in a different strain.

"But this, you would say, is beside the record of the boy. Well, then, the story of the infant on the sands of Coney Island was one at which these wise men marvelled much, and forthwith consulted the counsellors, or state organs, as they are called in the native dialect, to tell them what was to be done; and who did tell them. Ten governors were chosen for this baby, to take charge of his health and education; a



royal castle was built of marble or limestone, which is all the same in geology, for his reception; a river was turned from its channel to purify the atmosphere, or for pump-water; and the revenues of a large city set apart to pay expenses. Nurses were procured; medical men were in attendance; sages of great learning were present to expound the laws of the empire; with the pick and choice between two religions, whose creeds benevolently roasted each other, both, therefore, patriotically supported by liberal municipal taxation. Within the palace gates might be heard spoken all the various languages of the polished courts of the world, saltpetred with some Doric variations, more sulphuric than sublime or refined. The Regency were well pleased, as the princely domicile was on an island removed from the contaminating influence of female benevolent institutions; and the sovereign, Vox Populi, was delighted. Such a foreign air was about the palatial mansion, that Vox would have been in ecstasy had only the boy been foreign born, and the naturalization papers of his father made out in due form of law. Ye Gods! would he not soon have been called on for a vote-ive offering to the idols of the nation! Once every year after the festival of Ceres, and after the season when mournful hymns are sung in commemoration of her daughter's marriage with Pluto, the lawgivers of the State, noted for their piety to the goddess of agriculture in the rural districts, and renowned for their lineal descent from Solon, Lycurgus, and Numa Pompilius, are wont to proceed in state to this sumptuous island. There the rites sacred to Bacchus are resumed, and oblations, culled from the choice pressure of corn, of grape, and strychnine, are poured out in copious libations. Then the Pompilians return by night, in hacks hired at the city's expense, elated with favorable omens, reeling under the divinity's influence, in-



spired with thoughts more than mortal, and singing appropriate sacred songs of Hellenic anthology or Ethiopian origin, as they are borne along in ecstatic trance, like the Grecian girl glowing from the embrace—”

At this instant Walter, losing his balance on his chair, was near falling, when Chester seized the opportunity to exclaim :

“Oh, stop your nonsense. What became of the boy born like a sand-piper?”

“I forgot, Harry—excuse me. I was thinking of the jolly time these fellows have of it, and how well the facts would look if clothed in hexameter on their journals.”

“What jolly fellows are you talking about? You do not mean to say that Pompilians, as you call them, can be found, and that you believe all the rigmarole you have been telling?”

“Believe it!” exclaimed Walter; “To be sure I believe it. Why not? It is true as Genesis. Oh, if they would only make me their clerk, would I not describe their spree! Would I not flourish myself! But the age of Froissarts is gone.”

Once more he resumed his cigar.

“Well, tell me, Walter, what became of the boy? Go on with his story. I suppose you know where he went after he left Randall’s Island?”

“I tell the tale as it was told to me. I never inquired the name of the island, as that would imply a doubt of the legend.”

“Then let us have the sequel in your own style.”

“Not much more remains to tell,” said Walter. “The boy fed, learned, and grew fat for some dozen of years, and then ran away. He tried to get a situation as a steamboat porter, but not being able to lift a trunk high enough to smash it, was very properly refused. Next he thought of



being a cook or cabin-boy on a canal boat. But in the meantime he was hungry, tired, and sleepy; so, like Undine, he made a dive for an oyster cellar, where they gave him something to eat, and the privilege of sleeping, like a Peri, on a basket of shells—his parent earth, as it were. It is said his mother, in short skirts and woollen stockings, appeared to him in a dream, and warned him to give up his canal boat ham and egg frying-pan speculation. Next he was unsuccessful as an humble member of the news-vending fraternity; when he politely commenced polishing the virgin street pavements with a broom and blacking gentlemen's muddy pedestals with a brush. Finally, he was brought here by a very decent sort of a looking woman, to punch the fire, copy papers, and carry them to their destination; or to do whatever may be wanted of an office-boy. And so the tale ended."

"Classical, and correspondingly fabulous," remarked Chester. "In what period of ancient history did all this happen?"

"In the eleventh Presidential Olympiad, when Andrew, the Old Harry or Hickory, was archon," answered Walter, gravely as he would quote a passage from Thucydides.

"What does the boy say of himself?"

"He seems to be ignorant of his parentage, and morbidly sensitive on the subject; wherefore I have never had the heart to press the inquiry."

Chester mused over the strange story for some minutes, half doubting its being authentic, half inclined to believe Walter, although well knowing his fondness for this kind of fanciful legendary exhibition. At length he remarked: "It is strange that Tunc, as you call him, should ever have been a pauper at Randall's Island."

At that moment a boy of some fourteen or fifteen summers entered the room, after closing the door carefully behind him.



He was dressed with the utmost neatness, more befitting the son of a gentleman than an outcast; and in his air and in his manners the expression of such sweetness, that no fond mother ever doated on a more beautiful child. His light brown hair fell over his clear forehead, and his deep blue eyes, with their long lashes, gave to his rosy cheeks a clear, soft, effeminate hue, seldom seen in youth; while his figure, rather tall and slim, but healthy, betokened no hardships or sufferings in the unknown quarter where he was nurtured.

Walking up to Walter, the boy, with a clear, ringing voice, softly said: "I am sorry in being so late to-day, as it was only an accident."

To this Walter made no reply, but gazing in his sweet face, at the same time brushing with his hand the boy's hair from his clear forehead, slowly answered: "No one doubts it, my brave fellow; so long as you keep that honest look, you will be a beauty."

The boy next approached and shook hands with Harry Chester, whom he had not seen for several days. Could this graceful youth be the shipwrecked child of an unknown German immigrant? Who could say that he had sprung up from infancy among toil, suffering, and squalid associations? Such might have been the reflections of these young lawyers as they sat admiring his prepossessing appearance and deportment. The kind tone of Walter's voice had fallen upon his sensitive heart to fill up a void long felt in his precocious bosom for a friend in whom to trust.

"Now, take a seat by the fire," said Walter, "and tell us the price of apples, if that forbidden fruit was the temptation which detained you."

"I did not stop below Canal street," the boy answered; "a fire was at a ribbon store, and I remained to—"



"Of course, you remained to do something for your country," interrupted Walter. "It is astonishing, Chester, what a prevailing epidemic patriotism has become in Young America. It is a positive disease. But how went the day, my gallant Tunc, at the fire, among the ribbons? Did you save any of the pieces, or were your attentions exclusively devoted to the ladies, you dissipated young rascal? It is well you cannot speak French, or you would have endeavored to insinuate yourself into the good graces of the old she-dragon that keeps the store. I know her well."

"I did help her," was Tunc's reply, warming his hands.

"You helped her! In what way did you make yourself useful?"

The boy answered: "The old lady was in great distress about her little girl, whom she would trust to no one. I offered to take care of it, and she let me do so."

"I suppose the old dragon kissed you for a good wet-nurse, if the firemen were playing their hose upon you?"

The boy blushed, and only admitted that she had thanked him for his services.

"How do you know she thanked you, when she does not speak a word of English?"

"Because I spoke to her in French, and then she permitted me to hold her child."

Hereupon Walter gave a prolonged whistle of astonishment. "So you understand French, do you? I thought German was your mother tongue."

Tunc answered briefly: "I speak both."

"At what school, my boy, did you get your learning?"

A crimson glow suffused his countenance, as with downcast look he answered: "I don't know."

"But your mother spoke German?"



"I don't know," the boy again modestly replied, in the same desponding tone.

"Possibly in fitting you for your public career," Walter remarked, "your kind professors threw in a few more dictionaries and grammars—Portuguese, Spanish, and Italian?"

Tunc was about to answer hastily, but after a moment's pause he submissively replied: "If I am acquainted with other languages, I can only say I do not know which I learned first, for I did not learn them at any school."

The young lawyers exchanged glances of surprise at this unexpected response. The conversation had become highly interesting. But Walter Parker perceived he had unintentionally touched upon delicate ground. To change the subject, therefore, he hastily remarked: "Why don't you add music and dancing to your other perfections, to flirt with all the prime donne and ballet dancers? But I dare say you know them all."

The boy's eyes sparkled as he answered: "Pretty much."

"What do you mean by 'pretty much,' you old reprobate? Is it the arts you know, or only the lungs and legs of the artists?"

Tunc laughed, as he replied: "I am very fond of music and dancing, and see much of them at the opera and Niblo's. These people are very kind to me, and more than one prima donna has taken me with her shopping, to her dressing-room, and to rehearsals."

"Do they sing for you?"

"Yes, whenever I ask them. And then, you know, I have sometimes to accompany them in soprano, or to play for them when practising."

"Odds quavers and crotchets," exclaimed Parker, "a musician also! Why, my fine fellow, we will make you



chairman for the board of directors of a hand-organ manufactory."

"I did not say," interrupted the boy, "that I was a musician."

"Yes, you are," said Walter.

"Get thee an ape and trudge Broadway,  
Making sounds horrid night and day.

While I think of it, Mr. Punchinello, you had better run over to the monkey boarding-house in Brooklyn, kept by the Jerusalem creoles, and purchase or hire one of their pets; or, if you wish, I will write on your behalf an epistle to the Hebrews. Then, if music be the food of love, grind on. And take with you the little barefooted daughter of Zion, to circulate the tambourine for a deposit of copper-coined currency. But perhaps, Tunc, your taste lies in the ballet. How do you relish the little dancing-girls, with pipe-stem legs and cobweb shake-downs? Tell us what you know of the sylphids."

The boy was in no haste to speak; but an evident desire to please overcame his reluctance on a subject that seemed to be painful. At length he answered: "Dancing is difficult to learn, but I was sickly and very weak. It did me good and made me strong. I am now right glad I danced so much, so very, very much. But these poor little girls suffer."

"Where, my dear fellow," exclaimed Walter, "are your accomplishments to end? Surely, you must have gratified some good relative in learning them."

The boy replied mournfully: "I never had any accomplishments, nor any relative to be pleased with them."

"Poor fellow! are you alone in the world, without friends to care for you, and with none even to cheer you on?"



"Alone," repeated the boy, as the tear started in his eye, and he abruptly left the room.

That night the old counsellor and Walter held a long consultation; but what happened was never known. On the next day the woman who had brought the boy, being sent for, was closeted as before. Never again was she known to enter the office; nor did Tunc make his appearance as usual. In a few months he was forgotten by the clients who had noticed his handsome face, as important changes soon after occurred. The good old uncle, the senior counsel, suddenly died, so that Walter succeeded to his place in the inner room, with all its business and tin boxes, its perquisites and parchments. But amid the mass of papers nothing was found to reveal the mystery respecting the boy. Perhaps the old uncle was as ignorant as his nephew on the subject.

---

## CHAPTER II.

THOSE who controlled the destinies of the unfortunate boy had wisely resolved to remove him from the drudgery of a lawyer's office, and to give him a classical education. He was therefore sent to college at a distance from the city, where he soon after arrived with a heavy heart. It was indeed a great trial to deprive him of the society of the few from whom he had received kindness, and to place him among strangers indifferent to his welfare. He was now too distant from New York to have anything in common with the metropolis, and he felt not only solitary but sad in the extreme. No friendly hand was outstretched to give him a welcome;



no familiar face to smile a greeting in initiating him to the habits and customs of student life.

His presence at recitations first attracted the attention of his classmates, where his prepossessing appearance made for him a favorable impression, while his manly bearing when addressing the professor won for him all hearts. Yet his innate modesty, his distrust of himself, gave him many desponding hours, causing him even to shrink often with timidity when in public. But, calling to his aid his indomitable resolution, and knowing full well he had to carve out his own fortunes, he persevered till he was reconciled to the change. As time wore on, his proficiency in ancient languages created astonishment and admiration, which increased when recitations came off in French in the modern department. Some trivial circumstance excited the interest of the instructor, as he became aware of Trenk's intimate knowledge of that tongue. The Professor sent for him to come to his apartments, ostensibly to ascertain if his further attendance in the French class were required; but in reality to learn something of the modest, manly boy, who was unknown to all. The aged linguist received him kindly, and after some inquiries, dispatched him to the residence of the president of the college with a note, to serve as an introduction.

The Rev. Doctor Sempronius, the chief of this venerable and richly endowed seat of learning, had already passed the meridian of his long and useful life without showing any signs of physical decrepitude or mental decline. His fame for piety, his learning and eloquence, his zeal and success in the cause of education, had given him an enviable, unbounded reputation throughout the country. His profound judgment, his sagacity, his experience in the common affairs of life;



above all, his admirable control over youths who came within his influence, acquired for him a pre-eminent standing and position. It was therefore expected he would be looked upon as superior to his fellow men—as one to be revered, honored, and beloved. In his boyhood he had sat at the feet of those great minds, those giants in energy and in genius who achieved the national independence, who created—and the more difficult task—upheld the new political institutions, leaving behind them the impress of their actions and sentiments in those immortal writings that may long survive even the republic of their creation. They acted and wrote “not for an age, but for all time,” as was said of Shakspeare by a contemporary poet; and they founded an empire, not for a few straggling, sparsely populated States, stretched along the shores of an ocean, but for a densely peopled, wealthy, and wide-spreading hemisphere of the globe.

Doctor Sempronius had watched over and directed the mental development of the strongest and brightest intellects of the succeeding generation, some of whom had already passed away—some of whom were yet putting forth the great powers he had long before trained them to exercise properly. Another growth was now springing up, twining the delicate infant tendrils of their young hearts and plastic minds around the venerable preceptor, standing like a hoary monument of the past, to give form and pressure in sagely precept, in illustrious example, to those who were destined to become potential and to wield the destinies of a nation. Nor was he unmindful of the duties required of him in the advancement of learning, the progress in science, the culture of the moral and religious qualities, that go hand in hand with political ethics. To the arts he was no less devoted, although not falling immediately within his sphere



of action; for in them he saw the useful, the ennobling, the refining influences on his countrymen.

Many wondered he had not walked forth into the arena of active life, to participate in its strifes, to win the honors and renown so easily to be won by him, so justly due to his transcendent abilities. As a patriot, as a Christian, as a duty to himself, it was thought he had suffered the tide of affairs to flow past without bearing him on its buoyant wave of fortune to more enduring fame. But to him these opinions seemed fallacious, as he believed he was discharging his duties with fidelity and all honor at his appropriate post assigned to him in the battle of life. It is true he was not foremost in the field, the most conspicuous to public gaze, the one on whom was concentrated the most popular applause. In the distribution of forces pushing on in the campaign of human progress, his station seemed to be in the rear, amid the reserves, relieved from the perils of the day, but where none of its brilliant honors are won. Be it so, thought he. While the army of civilization advances its successive columns, their tactics, their weapons, their very principles of action, are for ever improving, changing, discarded; new conscripts are for ever wanted, and each conscript must be familiar with every approved change or modification of the preceding, knowing more than his predecessor. For ever looking to the front to note the perpetual mutation, for ever training the reserves for each new modification, he carefully inspected every young recruit in the passing review before him, in conscious pride and satisfaction of his duty performed. A patriot, he proclaimed no new, no startling political platform; a soldier of the cross, he unfurled no peculiar religious banner; a martyr, he suffered no blazing honors from the fagot to be enshrined with posthumous apotheosis as a saint.



The senior students, who knew much of the venerable Doctor, looked up to him with reverence, almost bordering on awe, and spoke of him as a man superior to all other mortals. In their intercourse with him they were overcome with a sense of their own inferiority, till he brought them back to a more correct estimate of their relative merits by a peculiar tact with which he swayed young people. But Trenk, fortunately, or unfortunately, had never learned much about the President, nor had the few allusions to him been noticed with more respect than as many traditions about some myth. When, therefore, the boy was ushered into the presence of Doctor Sempronius, he felt none of the profound abasement, the shrinking insignificance he might have experienced had his information been more accurate or extensive. He only saw before him a venerable, white-haired, tall, clerical gentleman, whose striking features commanded respect, due both to his years and position. Trenk, in silence, handed him the note, while the Doctor motioned him to be seated as he read its contents.

"This note informs me," slowly remarked the President, raising his glasses from his eyes to his forehead, "that you have lately arrived, my son, and are familiar with the modern languages. I believe you are from New York, where your parents reside?"

"I have no parents, sir."

"Oh, I beg pardon; your guardian."

"Nor guardian," answered Trenk, in a frank, manly voice.

The Doctor looked earnestly in the boy's face for a moment, while he grasped his spectacles with his crooked little finger, and then once more glanced at the note in his hand.

"Did you not bring letters with you?"



"I do not know what was written. But it is possible old Mr. Parker, in his kindness, may have sent a letter."

"True enough, true enough," the doctor said, musing, as if recalling the fact; "but you can go, my son." And as Trenk rose to leave the room, the President added: "I hope you will be attentive to your studies, to prove a blessing and honor to your," here he recollected himself, "to your country."

"But I have no country," Trenk answered, as he made his bow and closed the door behind him.

"No parents, no guardian, no country," muttered the venerable man aloud to himself, turning over a file of letters, till he found one for which he sought. After a careful perusal, he laid it down to reflect upon its contents. "No wonder Parker, that cunning old fox, could make nothing of this mystery. But he was right in sending him to me. A life of hardship, perhaps of suffering, of want; vice perpetually before his eyes to imitate; passions stimulated, without a controlling hand or a guardian counsellor; his moral faculties distorted; his better feelings blunted by ill usage; habits, associations, low and vulgar; perhaps his language full of profanity, his mind equally full of impurity. Why was not the lawyer more explicit? But I will write to him before I decide." Hereupon, he rose and walked to the window, as he added: "It would never do to place such a boy in the position."

While the Doctor was thus forming a conjectural estimate of the young student, Trenk, in turn, was making up no exalted opinion of the venerable President. He had received him kindly, to be sure, but had dismissed him rather coldly; nor could he perceive any object accomplished in the interview. Boys are apt to suppose great people are always saying or doing something wonderful. But his lucubrations



were cut short by another student, who approached full of envy at the unwonted honor done Trenk in a personal conversation vouchsafed to him by the Doctor.

"So you have been, old chap, to see the Prex? What did he say?"

"Not much," Trenk answered.

"Well, then, what did you say?"

"Not much."

"By all the gods of Demosthenes and Cicero, you must have bottled up your eloquence on both sides. Did you use the dumb alphabet? What did he want with you?"

"That is more than I know," said Trenk, decidedly.

"Then what did you want with him?"

"Nothing."

"Look here, old fellow," the student exclaimed, in a suppressed rage, "if you are going to come the Sphynx dodge over me, I will apply some leather motive-power, for which I have a sole agency, to the posterior side of your pantaloons."

"May be you had better exhibit your engine, instead of advertising only," retorted Trenk, in no amiable mood.

"Well, I don't care if I do," cried the student, at the same time kicking Trenk on the ankle. Nathan held down both hands to rub his foot, for the blow was severe, while tears started in his eyes. Whereupon his antagonist, perceiving no resistance was made, gave him another kick. "Take that," said he; "and may be you will feel better to-morrow."

Although the freshman was much larger than Trenk, he did not hesitate, after the second insult, to defend himself. He threw down his hat, leisurely drew off his coat, and untied his neck ribbon. Thereupon, not waiting for a



parley, he squared himself for a fight. His enemy stood astonished at this unexpected demonstration; but before he could speak, Trenk struck him full in the right eye, and as the student swerved, he planted another blow on his nose, which caused the blood to flow profusely. He attempted to seize Trenk, who stepped back to avoid the grasp, and again struck him under the jaw, when the student turned to run. Hereupon Trenk administered a kick that sent the retreating party on his face to the ground, with Trenk on top kicking and striking, till he was pulled off, foaming with rage, by those who had run up to see the fight.

Doctor Sempronius had observed the whole affair from his parlor window, and instantly sent a servant to part the combatants. The servant, however, came up too late for that purpose, but spread consternation by the announcement that the President had been a witness of the encounter.

"You will be expelled," said a little village Hampden.

"Rusticated, at least," added an inglorious Milton, by way of amendment.

"It's mean to strike after a fellow's down," shouted a future Patrick Henry, as Trenk tied on his ribbon and walked off, putting an arm in his coat.

On the next day the matter was most formally and officially reported to the President, with all the facts distorted, in which it was made to appear that Trenk was the wanton aggressor. Again he was sent for, and asked by the Doctor what he had to say for himself. Nathan gave a manly, true version of the affair, but apologized for having punished the boy, even in self-defence. To the President's surprise, he added: "I know it was wrong to fight him, but my pain was great and my blood was up. Perhaps when I am older I will be more able to control myself."



"Yet you say you were insulted?"

"Yes, sir, I was insulted; but I do not expect to fight for every insult."

"What would you do then?"

"I would act like a gentleman if I knew how, and hope I shall learn."

"You should rather act like a Christian."

"That is the same thing, Doctor."

"But Christians do not fight, my son."

"People calling themselves Christians may not fight; but that does not make them Christians."

"I am afraid, very much afraid, your religious instruction has been neglected."

"It may be so, but it was the only education for which I was praised by her, or which seemed to give her pleasure."

"Then you have not been without friends?"

To this remark Trenk made no reply. After a moment's silence, the Doctor asked: "Have you been treated with kindness and attention?"

Trenk did not answer, keeping his eyes fixed on the carpet.

"My son," the Doctor resumed, "I witnessed the unfortunate affair. Your whole conduct then, as well as the present conversation, meets my approbation. Many wrongs, many insults must be suffered, to be forgiven and forgotten. But do not estimate them therefore otherwise than as insults and wrongs. You are right; a Christian and a gentleman are the same. To be one you must be the other. You gave the boy a thrashing which he deserved, and as no bones are broken, all will soon be mended."

Trenk was beset, as he left the Doctor's parlor, with inquiries as to the result. Was he "to be expelled," "suspended," "rusticated," "admonished," "or what?" To all



these questions he made no reply, but at last he stopped, shut his fist, pushed his hat back on his head, and exclaimed: "I tell you what it is, fellows, I don't know what will be done; but this I do know, that the Doctor is a gentleman."

Three cheers "and a tiger" were given for this speech, when a boy Newton cried: "Where do you bury your dead?"

"I will do it by contract," said the village Hampden; while the young Milton remarked:

"He's going to apply to Congress for a quarter section of public lands for a private graveyard."

At length Trenk reached his room, surprised, bewildered, and confused, with the recent events. Could he believe his own ears, that the Doctor approved his fighting, which was done in hot blood; his disrespectful language before him under his great excitement; and, above all, that both his conduct and conversation were those of a gentleman? He thought he had perceived that the Doctor's eye slightly sparkled as he narrated the incidents of the fight, and that he gave a gentle, approving nod of his head when Nathan declared his intention to act like a gentleman under all circumstances. But Trenk blushed; blushed crimson, when he remembered his boisterous manner and bravado language. He blushed also when he remembered the fight, vowing that he would never strike another blow. But, above all, he went to sleep with the agreeable thought that he would willingly spend all his days in the service of Doctor Sempronius, and lay down his life for him with pleasure.



## CHAPTER III.

THE fight with Maclin had made Trenk famous in college. It had given him notoriety in the classes above his own; it had made his face familiar even to the seniors. The ushers and professors noticed when he touched his hat to them. His timid, retiring, almost bashful deportment only caused him to be the more observed, as it was evident he was ashamed of the exploit, although all were aware of the true version of the story; and above all that Doctor Sempronius had dismissed him from his study without a reprimand. Of course, if the Doctor thought Trenk was right, everybody thought the same; "for, did not the Doctor see it himself?" The President was a consummate tactician; he knew the students would side with Trenk, and he knew he had made Trenk a friend for life by frankly admitting that he had not done wrong. It was good policy; it was good common sense in the Doctor; and, as he revolved it in his venerable mind, he was satisfied under every aspect it was right. Those only who are popular can properly govern the world—or a college.

Soon after this event another summons came from the President to call at his study whenever he was at leisure. On entering, Trenk found the venerable Doctor reading a letter he seemed to be perusing with much attention, as he scarcely noticed his presence.

"My son," said he, laying down the epistle, "this letter which I have received to-day from Mr. Parker about you, relieves my mind of many doubts I had respecting your former education and training. I wish to introduce you into my family, if it be agreeable to you. In doing so, let me



assure you I have a good opinion of your principles and of your habits. Your manners have yet to be formed, and I will assist you in that, if you wish to become a gentleman." He proceeded to explain he had two boys about twelve years of age under his charge, whom he was anxious to perfect in some of the modern languages, and therefore desired Trenk to take the direction of that branch of their education; to become one of his family, while he pursued his studies in the college.

This proposition, with all the explanations and details, was joyfully with much gratitude accepted by Trenk, who could scarce find a few words to intimate his willingness, as big tears came into his beaming eyes, and a thick phlegm in his throat almost checked his utterance. The Doctor took him by the hand, and led him through several apartments into a small parlor called the music room, where a young lady about Trenk's age was practising on the piano.

"Mary, my child," said the President, addressing her, "I have brought with me the young gentleman who is to go over the French lessons with the boys, and till they come in, you may give him a little instruction in music." Then turning to Trenk, he added: "I will now leave you to take your own course, as you can form an opinion of them in your own way."

As the Doctor departed, the young lady turned round on the music stool, without any embarrassment, to open the conversation.

"I think my uncle, who has just left without mentioning your name, does not imagine I have made much progress in my music lessons."

"I am called Nathan Trenk," he answered.

"Oh! I beg your pardon, I have heard your name before;



but as uncle did not mention it, I do not know if he intended what he said to pass for an introduction."

"He wished you to teach me music," said Trenk, smiling.

"I hope you are better qualified to teach French; for in sober earnest I am making sad work on this piano."

"What is the cause of that?"

"Well, I don't know, unless it is no one seems interested in what I play, and I am sure it is dull enough to me."

"Perhaps as you progress your uncle will be better pleased with your performance."

"Fond as my uncle is of music, he does not encourage my efforts. Perhaps he thinks I will never excel, and therefore it is time thrown away."

"I could form a better opinion if I had the pleasure of listening to some of your pieces."

"With all my heart," said she, turning over the leaves of her music-book, and began. It did not take long for Trenk to discover her defects in voice and execution, but at the same time to perceive she had musical talents above the common order.

"No wonder, Miss Mary, you dislike your music; for it is very bad. If you were to commence again on a different system, I think in a very short time you would not consider it a dull work. Let me show you." Hereupon Trenk seated himself at the instrument, and commenced some of his favorite airs.

Mary stood almost spell-bound in admiration at the young performer, as he gave form and expression, beauty and sweet melody to pieces which heretofore she had quite detested. Trenk proceeded playing and singing till he found himself engaged in some new, beautiful, and fashionable gems from the latest operas, to the infinite delight and rapture of his



fair listener. Then changing his manner and style, he placed his foot firmly on the pedal and began a popular song from the Ethiopian minstrels. He observed at this instant the entrance of the boys.

When he had finished and rose from the piano, Mary called to them to come and be introduced to their new teacher.

"A new teacher of music?" inquired one.

"To be sure," said Mary; "how could he know anything else?"

"I am glad of it," answered the youth; "now I'll learn all the nigger songs, and to play on the bones."

"Then you wish to learn music," said Trenk.

"Yes, indeed. I wish I could play like you; I'd give anything to know how. I'd give a hundred dollars, I would."

"Well, my good fellow, you shall learn, although I did not come to teach you."

The boys looked disappointed at this announcement, and he added: "I have come to talk French, but never mind; we will learn music first, then the bones, next the banjo, then the tamborine, and next the French."

The youths shouted with delight at this assurance of the happy times coming. And they all became the best of friends forthwith. Trenk gave them a few more choice compositions of a Southern aspect, of the "Away down in Alabama" manufactory.

Under these favorable auspices he became an inmate of the family of Doctor Sempronius. It is almost needless to add, in a short time the boys and Mary had made such progress in languages and music as to give to him the greatest pleasure and satisfaction. The Doctor gradually warmed to the homeless young teacher who had made him-



self so much beloved by the young people; for he naturally supposed the influence Trenk had over them would have the most beneficial effect on their studies. Trenk himself was for the first time in his strange life in constant association with refined, intellectual persons; meeting with kindness and consideration he had never experienced; but which, from his sensitive, grateful heart, was the more appreciated. His first care seemed to him to win the approbation of Doctor Sempronius, for all other pleasures were trivial to him in comparison with this; and it was in the exact performance of his duties that this approbation was to be obtained. He had already secured the intimate friendship of Mary and the youths with whom he passed almost all his hours of recreation; while his studies were prosecuted with the utmost diligence and success. It seemed he could find in the attention shown by the Doctor, in his friendly counsels and advice, a true barometer to the degree of regard the venerable President entertained for him. Whenever his collegiate studies did not intervene, Trenk's thoughts were directed to pleasing, and at the same time instructing, the young people. Nor was the venerable President unobservant of the young student; for he approvingly nodded his head, as he said to his aged sister: "What a prize I have gained in him!" The young student had also his solitary thoughts to comfort him, as he renumbered o'er the many benefits derived from the Doctor; and, in the moments when he dwelt on his present happiness and progress, he, too, murmured: "What a prize I have found in that great and good old man!"

As time wore on, the circle of Trenk's acquaintance enlarged. He was introduced to many agreeable people in the city, through his intimacy with the family of Doctor Sempronius. In addition to these was one more at a country



villa, beyond the city limits, near the sea-shore, where the bathing was excellent, and where dwelt the rich, retired banker, the Honorable Mr. Dryvis. Why he was called the "Honorable," was not easy to comprehend, as he never held an office, and consequently had not passed through the moral and personal degradation, now so common, on the railroad track to popular honors. Why, therefore, Mr. Dryvis should have his name thus veneered to make it respectable as that of other quiet gentlemen without the suspicious prefix, was a mystery, and remains a mystery even unto this day. But such was the fact. The Honorable Mr. Dryvis, of Druid-oaks, flourished in retirement at his country villa, as he had formerly flourished in Europe as a banker. He had returned to this spot, in his own country, for some reasons of financial policy difficult to understand; not because he was silent as to his motives, but for the opposite reason—that he told so many different and irreconcilable stories on the subject. The Honorable Mr. Dryvis was an industrious man, even in his seclusion. From his voluminous correspondence, both domestic and foreign; from the files of newspapers, with other documents, that daily littered his business room, it was evident he had not entirely weaned himself from the cares or vanities of this world. In truth, his time was now as much occupied as it had ever been in Threadneedle street, or at the Bourse, in Paris. He had been heard to say the duties he owed to his young family induced him to quit active life. But this was a species of indebtedness on which liquidation could be postponed without any official protest; for it was suffered to lie over—at least so far as the Honorable Mr. Dryvis was concerned. But his wife, English by birth and education, and of one of the oldest families of the gentry, on the contrary, relieved her husband



of this important task; that is to say, she always talked about the education of her children to any chance visitor who might call. But in the absence of any visitor, she lay in bed all day reading novels.

A governess, whom they had brought with them from England, acted as a sort of first lieutenant to this female commander, doing all that ought to have been done by her, but leaving all the rigmarole conversation and credit to the mother, brought to bed with the last new novel. This governess was somewhat under thirty, with a great degree of beauty, a highly finished education, and rare good common sense. She had seen much of society, where her varied accomplishments were sufficiently admired to make her feel perfectly at her ease in the company in which she was now thrown, although some of the most refined and intellectual of the country. Winning in her manners, with an easy flow of conversation, graceful in her movements, and always cheerful, even to the verge of kindness, Miss Howard shed rays of sunshine on the family circle at the Druidoaks. One young daughter of the Honorable Mr. Dryvis, of the age of fourteen, was her especial charge; although a little boy of seven, and a still younger girl of five years, reported to her for duty in the absence of the commander-in-chief, who was on special service, flourishing a paper-cutter over a new publication.

It must not be supposed the novel-reading lady was deficient in good sense, or in personal activity in her movements, if the occasion required their exercise, or when the whim seized her. Paradoxical as it may seem, it was on profound reflection she was convinced the most profitable and pleasant mode of passing her time was reading in bed. She knew what was requisite in the education of children but that she



was incapable from her temperament to control or manage them. She knew that Miss Howard had the very qualities in which she was deficient.

But when the little folks were ill, then the scene changed. Miss Howard was helpless. Then the novels were laid aside, while the lady herself performed to perfection the duties of a nurse and of a kind, considerate parent. In ordinary times, the intercourse between the lady and Miss Howard was of the most agreeable kind, as Mrs. Dryvis was an adept in collecting amusing dishes of gossip, which she poured into the ears of the governess, flavored with a species of wit and indescribable humor irresistibly amusing. It was enough for her that Miss Howard was a good listener; it was enough for the governess nothing more was required of her than to listen. Perhaps had she been called on to furnish any of the entertainment, the happy understanding would have been broken, as Miss Howard's excursions in search of gossip or scandal had neither been far nor frequent with fast people. No two ladies could be more opposite in their modes of thinking; but no two ladies could love each other more, for both would have been unhappy were they separated. The methodical, quiet manner and habit of acting of the governess supplied all the deficiencies of the head of the household; and in return, the lady afforded to Miss Howard all the amusement, society, and friendship she seemed to care for.

Trenk first became acquainted at the Druidoaks, where he had gone as an escort to Mary and the boys in paying an evening visit. The Honorable Mr. Dryvis was busy writing letters in his room, and his conjugal consort was in bed deep in the story of a novel. But Miss Howard received and lavished on them all the kindness and attention with which



she knew how, in her quiet, easy, and graceful manner, to make young people happy; and the children of both families seemed to think a sweet charm was around all the amusements she provided.

The impression the young student made upon the governess was great. She had watched his every movement in the care and solicitude evinced that the boys should exhibit their accomplishments to advantage, and at the same time enjoy themselves to the utmost. Their music displayed the results of careful training, guided with excellent taste; and in their French pronunciation she perceived the purest accent and highly creditable proficiency. On further acquaintance with him, and having heard through others of his early history, Miss Howard not only became a great admirer, but a good friend, and finally counsellor of the young man. His visits to the Druidoaks were frequent; and in due time, through the daily reports of the governess, he became well known, along with his merits, to Mrs. Dryvis.

This lady had long wished for such a person, although without any hopes of meeting with one. It was requisite her daughter should dance a little different from the style of her instructor, and should hear some other music than that of the governess. Trenk was the very person to aid Miss Howard, and consequently his visits to the villa were encouraged. But it was not altogether a selfish motive in the lady; for in truth she had become interested in him, wanting to serve him, if it were in her power. She wished always to have some pet, and being at this time tired of one on hand, she was well disposed to substitute the young teacher.

The Honorable Mr. Dryvis could scarcely be said to be a party consulted in this arrangement, as he never met the



young man except at dinner, where he paid him only the civility due to a student visiting his children; and so soon as he quit the table he dismissed all thoughts of him from his financial intellect. The Hon. Mr. Dryvis would never have known anything more of him, had not Trenk been seated at the lady's bedside one Sunday when the banker entered the apartment. Trenk was in the habit of passing some hours of Saturday and all of every Sunday with the Druids; and it pleased the novel-reading Norma to accord him a seat at her bedside, while she extracted from him such incidents of his former life as, by any species of torture, she could thumb-screw out of him. This was not much, but it served to heighten her curiosity and interest. On stories connected with the opera, ballet, and theatres, of prime donne, sylphids, and managers, he was a prodigious mine of new material from the coulisses. He had not, in reality, much to tell; and that of the most harmless character. But with her experience and fancy, she could imagine trains of circumstances and incidents to make his innocent talk the basis for the richest scandal to amuse Miss Howard and cause her to blush. In return, she charmed the young man with stories or descriptions of English life and manners, as he was anxious to learn the habits and style of conversation in the most refined British circles. Had she been his mother, she could not have been more careful in imparting interesting lessons, and instructing him in what it was requisite for a young gentleman to know.

Between them, therefore, an intimate friendship sprang up, making him at all times a welcome visitor. And if by chance he failed to appear on Saturday, a servant was sent to inquire the reason why "Cousin Nathan," as the lady now began to call him, did not come. The governess and



children were not long in according to him the appellation bestowed by the mother; and many visitors were mistaken in supposing him to be a relative and inmate of the family.

But the governess was his great favorite. It might be said he was slightly in love with her; which she soon perceived, without being displeased thereat. They took the longest walks; had the most extended conversations; exchanged their opinions, feelings, and thoughts on all kinds of people and all manner of subjects. To please her he would have perpetrated any extravagance; and to please her he had avoided a great deal of folly that young men most naturally fall into. He patiently endured her advice; and, what was still more afflicting, he bore without wincing her criticisms on his dress, music, conversation, manners, and aspirations. His love and his admiration for her acted like chloroform, in rendering him insensible to the pain her comments, under other circumstances, would sometimes have inflicted. Wanted, at all times, a sensible young lady to remove boyish conceits before a moustache has sprouted.

---

#### CHAPTER IV.

It may well be supposed the young student made himself useful at the Druidoaks. He fully realized the expectations of the mother as to the value of his assistance in the education and accomplishments of her children. Their music, dancing, and conversation in various languages were much improved by his presence; for he gave new life and interest to what had heretofore been looked upon only as tasks by the young people. Miss Howard was in many respects



superior to Trenk in her acquirements, and thus gave a finish to his otherwise defective education. She excelled him in a correct knowledge of languages, and was his equal in music and other accomplishments. But an indescribable novelty, a grace, a style were in his performances, highly attractive to the children, that induced them to learn with greater zeal and success.

The two boys and Mary also became constant visitors with him at the villa, where they joined the children in their dancing lessons under the joint instruction of the governess and Trenk. It was not known whether the President, Sempronius, approved of this branch of the fine arts, as it was never indulged in at his residence. But when Trenk alluded to their waltzing at the Druidoaks, the Doctor did not seem to disapprove of the pastime, only remarking that among children it was a graceful and healthy exercise. With this almost negative acquiescence, Trenk was satisfied he was not doing much violence to the worthy man's opinions in teaching them.

In the summer vacations, Nathan took the boys with him in his fishing and sailing excursions along the coast. He was on excellent terms with many fishermen, and usually engaged a skilful one of these with his sail-boat to accompany them. From this class of seamen Trenk acquired not only a fondness for the water, but also practical instruction in navigating small craft, so that in a short time he was an excellent sailor in an emergency or in any kind of weather. With the two boys to assist him, he deemed himself competent to man an oyster sloop, and had only been prevented clearing for a fishing cruise by the timely admonition of the Doctor, that there might not be perfect safety in an enterprise without some old and experienced hand on board.



Trenk, however, was ambitious of possessing a small yacht of his own, and had looked forward with many pleasing anticipations to the time when his funds would justify this outlay. He had counted all the cost, and had long financial and nautical cabinet councils with some half-dozen of old salts, who initiated him into all the mysteries of their calling, to whom he referred all his doubtful maritime questions. In two years, therefore, after entering college he was considered an expert sailor, equal in handling small craft to some of the best in the neighborhood.

It may be as well to take a look into the state of the young man's finances before proceeding further in any enterprise he had in contemplation. When the first vacation arrived, Trenk was agreeably surprised by an announcement from the Doctor that enough of money was to his credit for any excursion he might have in view. The Doctor informed him that the sum of \$500 was sent from New York to defray his annual expenses. But, as he had undertaken the tuition of the boys, the Doctor, in consideration of his services, and with the approbation of their parents, determined to pay for him whatever was due to the college treasurer. Consequently nearly the whole amount was at his disposal, as no charge was made for his boarding, which was included as part of his compensation. Thus Trenk found himself at the end of the second year in the possession of ample means to undertake long and distant fishing voyages without making heavy inroads on his funds.

He called Miss Howard into his counsels on money matters, and, as she was his confidential adviser on other subjects, he wisely determined to ask her to become his banker. The governess, without any hesitation, agreed to this proposal; when Trenk placed in her hands seven hundred dollars for



which he had no immediate use, and, most remarkable young man, he had escaped that sting to college follies—he had no debts to pay! That Miss Howard was his banker was a fact only known to themselves; and, as all questions of appropriation of money were submitted to her, he became cautious in his expenditures, withal systematic in keeping his accounts.

The Honorable Mr. Dryvis was the master of one of the most celebrated yachts which annually visited Newport. But the Honorable Mr. Dryvis was not thereby one of the best sailors that entered for the cup at the regattas. He was in truth no sailor at all; keeping only the *Bonanza*, as he kept carriage and horses, as part of his luxurious establishment. He entertained friends on board most sumptuously—friends whom he could only secure by this kind of attention; and if he were supposed to make a figure in the fashionable world, it was only, as he knew, that he might thereby make another corresponding figure in his cash ledger. The *Bonanza* was to the banker what a full brass band is to an enterprising hotel, an expensive attraction that brings customers. European bankers and American tavern-keepers, to be sure, are of the same tribe of Israelites, or Ishmaelites, or Sybarites, with the same manners, tastes, and ambitions at heart, but modified in externals to suit circumstances. Successful American landlords will soon become the leading bankers on the continent, and the broken-down bankers of Europe will make most capital hotel proprietors in American cities. It is not requisite to pursue the resemblance further, especially as it would only be the expression of truisms which must have occurred to every traveller in both hemispheres.

The *Bonanza* was an expensive item in the private accounts of the Honorable Mr. Dryvis, and one he was



most solicitous to reduce; as he vainly surmised he had not the worth of his money, with the acidulated opinion thereunto annexed that he was cheated on all sides by his crew. Although very methodical in keeping the books of the *Bonanza*, with her small boats and yawls, still he was not deeply versed in the prices and the uses of articles constantly required, to know how to check his naval bills coming in for supplies furnished to his small armada. He had to trust to the honesty of others, and surely the Hon. Mr. Dryvis knew that he himself had never taken honesty as a collateral security in any other business transactions, when he was perfect in the details. He did not wish, however, to give up the ship; but most devoutly prayed he might be informed how her expenses could be diminished, and, above all, that he should not be cheated.

He sent for an old sailor who had run a small craft for some years, and questioned him closely about the expenses of navigation in general, and about yachts in particular. But the old salt knew too little about accounts on a large scale to afford him much satisfaction. Other knowing ones were also consulted with similar failures, some of them insinuating that the banker was working a traverse to suit himself and to catch them, "for he knew what he was after, if nobody else did." One ancient mariner, slightly indignant he should be pumped, hinted he had better consult his nephew, and another soon after muttered something about "a nephew that knows well enough." A third, when closely cross-questioned on the price and quantity of paint, felt insulted outright that a full grown man should be asked such nonsense, and told him to send for his nephew. The banker, supposing that applying to a nephew was a nautical phrase not very complimentary in its significance, told the



man to hold his tongue if he could not give a civil answer. The sailor opened his eyes and mouth in astonishment, to ask the banker what he meant.

"You know I have no nephew, and I want none of your sea slang."

"I think your nephew could tell you as well as any one of us," the man doggedly muttered.

"But I tell you I have no nephew. Who do you all allude to, if you refer to any one, in telling me about my nephew?"

"Why, to young Mr. Trenk, to be sure," said the old tar; "your little son always calls him Cousin Nathan."

"So, so; to Mr. Trenk, my nephew; that's it. What does he know about yachts and sail-boats?"

"More than any one you have ever yet had in your employ; and it does seem strange you should ask us such simple questions when he could tell you quite as well."

A new light broke in upon the mind of the banker; the nephew, then, was not a nautical myth, but only a misnomer of the quiet, unobtrusive boy-student, whom he had never thought it incumbent on him to notice. Now, many might suppose that the pride of the Honorable Mr. Dryvis would revolt at the thought of calling on a student stripling to help him out of a difficulty in his affairs; and besides, prudence would check him in incurring an obligation to one who might very soon call upon him for some favor in return. But the banker was not troubled in his mind with such considerations. On the contrary, Trenk was the very kind of person he most readily would apply to and the most implicitly trust. Boys are not mercenary, and therefore he had no apprehension of the student's appropriating or misapplying the funds intended for the yacht; while his zeal



and energy, in matters from which pleasure was to be expected, no one would doubt. That Trenk was a fatherless boy, without family ties or connexions, without any expectations, dependent upon himself and on any good fortune that by chance should fall in his way, for any success in life, was rather a recommendation than otherwise to the Honorable Mr. Dryvis. It was by no slow, methodical, calculating process of reasoning the banker arrived at this business conclusion in regard to the student. His mind was made up so soon as he had heard him extolled. In the banker's long mental catalogue of numerous acquaintances, he had already placed the student under a heading which strictly was not even in the catalogue proper, but rather in the appendix or apocrypha, and on the very last page of that, among the "waifs."

The waifs on land are numerous as shipwrecks on the sea. Honor, riches, position, influence, principle, are being perpetually stranded on life's stormy ocean; and the pieces strewn along the margins of respectability often present some precious but damaged parcel, to be picked up or discarded, as fancy may impel the finder of such treasure trove. These waifs are the perpetual sport and terror, by turns, of bankers; sometimes appropriated and brushed up to suit a particular occasion, to be started adrift again when no longer wanted; sometimes palmed upon them as valuable, and found costly in the possession; but at all times to be used according to circumstances. In Mr. Dryvis's view poor Trenk was one of these—not deserving consideration, not worthy of contempt, but useful withal to the children, and therefore to be used without pity, hate, or affection. The banker could even be kind to him—nay, have some warm feelings, if it chimed in with his purpose, for it would cost nothing. Such was the general altitude of the student in



the mental measurement by the Honorable Mr. Dryvis. His usefulness in the children's education, however, and the pleasure his company afforded his wife, had so far put him in the list to be noticed with some little attention. His reputed knowledge of nautical matters still further advanced him in the banker's good graces. Therefore he was in the best of humors with Trenk, and, for being so, he would have thought the boy very ungrateful if he did not thank him in his heart. This genuine kindness throbbing in the banker's bosom would have become an uncomfortable feeling if an opportunity had not soon offered to let it gush forth. He availed himself of Trenk's next visit, while he was teaching the son and little daughter a new waltzing step, to enter the parlor. The Honorable Mr. Dryvis thanked him in the most gracious terms for his attention to his little folks, as a great kindness he highly appreciated; and hoped he would not spend so many leisure hours on such small children. He then turned the conversation, to inquire about his progress in college, his standing in his class, and other topics, till his face beamed with amiability, and his words flattering as ever fell from the lady or governess. He even went so far as to propose an excursion in the Bonanza to the young people of both families, and that he would join them himself. Trenk listened with much interest to the seductive banker, and was delighted to be thus noticed in a quarter so unexpected. He felt, however, he deserved what was said in his favor, and was not, therefore, embarrassed. His frank and open, but respectful, manner struck the banker favorably. On one point, however, he was disappointed. Trenk declined his invitation to take a sail on the Bonanza; nor could many persuasive arguments induce him to alter his mind. He assigned no particular reason for this strange determination;



and when the banker became pressing in his solicitations, Trenk subsided into complete silence, making no reply whatever.

The Honorable Mr. Dryvis was therefore disconcerted in finding himself at fault in a matter where he thought no difficulty could be imagined. But he resolved on trying another tack to find out Trenk's motive for declining his kind offer. On consultation with his wife, who laid down a new novel for the moment, he came to the conclusion that Miss Howard was the proper person to manage the young student, and the governess was accordingly summoned. Miss Howard had been surprised at Trenk's declining the invitation, and now her curiosity was aroused to find out the cause, especially as he had so often confessed to her his passion for a good sailing yacht.

She soon found Trenk, who was at the piano poring over some new music on her entrance.

"I have come, Cousin Nathan," said she, with a bewitching smile, "to thank you for spoiling our excursion on the water."

"Is that all?" Trenk replied, as he turned over the music leaves.

"That all! What do you mean by refusing the invitation on the Bonanza?"

"I mean to say I will not take the boys on that yacht, for it would give me no pleasure."

"You said as much before, but not quite so blunt. You seem to have some antipathy to the Bonanza. She is no woman, to run away with you."

"She might do worse—she might drown me."

"Drown you, my bold sailor boy! I thought you were more courageous."



"I am not," Trenk answered, as he ran his fingers over the keys of the instrument, to close further conversation about the Bonanza.

"Cousin Nathan, I wish you to listen to me for one moment seriously," said Miss Howard, as she took a seat at his side, with her back to the piano. "Mr. Dryvis has of late evinced much kindness to you, and I do not wish you, for many reasons, to be insensible to it. Your refusal of his invitation may displease him, if you have no good motive. Now have you any excuse for declining—tell me?"

"I am sensible of his kindness," Trenk answered; "but as my opinion of the yacht might displease him, I did not wish to give any."

"Then tell it to me in confidence," eagerly exclaimed the governess.

"Certainly I will, in confidence. The Bonanza is not seaworthy, and therefore I do not think her safe for the boys. She is not A 1."

"What is A 1?" asked the governess.

"I do not know myself; but all hands along shore say so."

"Mr. Dryvis will then have to make her A 1."

"I am afraid he cannot," said Trenk.

"But you remarked, cousin Nathan, that the Bonanza was not seaworthy. What makes you think so?"

"She is sloop-rigged, and in a gale of wind would run under. I was told that before I went on board, and now I know it. Let her be caught off the cape out yonder in a sudden blow, and she is gone."

"Has any one ever informed Mr. Dryvis of this?"

"I think not. She was built for New York harbor, and the Sound, and the Hudson; but not for this part of the coast, nor for the open sea."



"I heard something about the yacht," the governess remarked, "in some way discreditable; but I never understood it before."

"Yes! That was the story about the drag-chain put under her centre-board to prevent her fast sailing."

"What was the object of that, Nathan?"

"The Bonanza once had another name, and was built for fast sailing. On a public trial of her speed, they put the drag-chain under her, so as to make sporting gentlemen believe she could not take the cup in a regatta. The fancy, therefore, bet heavily against her, and were taken in. But before the regatta came off the trick was discovered; the yacht was ruled out, and could never be entered since. She was therefore sold."

"That was cheating, to be sure; but it does not affect her sailing."

"It does not affect her sailing in a fair wind, as her name implies; but she was not built to weather a storm."

"I think Mr. Dryvis ought to know this," said Miss Howard.

"Mr. Dryvis can easily know it from twenty 'longshoremen, if he will only ask them."

"What do they know about this yacht?"

"They know every yacht as well as I do," said Trenk.

"As well as you do, Cousin Nathan?"

"Yes, as well as I do, for we talk of nothing else, especially when a regatta is announced."

The clever governess was not dilatory in putting the Honorable Mr. Dryvis on the way of finding out all the defects of the Bonanza. The 'longshoremen spoke their minds very freely to the banker, and the banker formed even



a worse opinion of his yacht than would have been entertained at a marine insurance office.

---

## CHAPTER V.

THE Honorable Mr. Dryvis soon learned that the Bonanza was an unfortunate investment. But it would be some satisfaction to the banker to know how he had been cheated, as a vexatious suspicion is a more disagreeable state of mind than a knowledge of facts changing it into a certainty. He therefore proposed to Trenk to overhaul the management of the yacht, and to audit anew the expenses for the last season. The student consented to lend his assistance for this purpose, provided he could prevail on the governess to aid him in the undertaking. Miss Howard smiled at this condition, as she was not familiar with such matters, but cheerfully acquiesced.

In a few days Trenk, with his female chief clerk, went over all the items of the Bonanza's expenses, and took an account of stock of articles still unused. He was therefore enabled to draw up a statement so clear and exact, that the banker was surprised at the extent to which he had been plundered, but was much pleased to find one so young who could elucidate a business heretofore so confused. At once he took Trenk into his full confidence respecting the yacht, and in the most flattering terms asked the young man for his advice in the complication of difficulties. Trenk, in his usual quiet but frank manner, stated his opinion to the banker, advising him by all means to sell the Bonanza forthwith; for it was yet early in the summer.



Now to sell an expensive luxury at a moment's notice, it is well known, is as difficult as it is extravagant to keep it. The Honorable Mr. Dryvis was well aware of this ; but, with tact and caution, he knew how to dispose of the yacht in New York at a small sacrifice. He wrote to another banker, ostensibly a correspondent only, but privately a partner in fact, and the sale was effected. How the sale was effected by the most approved course of commercial dealings in such articles, a few words will explain. It was casually mentioned at a dinner party one day in the metropolis that the Honorable Mr. Dryvis was about returning to Europe, breaking up his luxurious establishment at the Druidoaks ; and at table it was hinted some fine horses, cattle, pictures, wines, and a beautiful yacht would be sold in a short time. The yacht was mentioned incidentally as a gem for sailing, the fleetest craft on the coast. It was wondered why the banker would sell her at all. But it was whispered he knew nothing about salt water, and was indifferent to regattas. It required, no doubt, courage in his correspondent to speak thus of the rich banker. But it may be surmised the dinner was got up, and guests invited, with special reference to a disposal of the Bonanza. Therefore the banker was underrated in order to over-estimate the Bonanza. One gentleman in particular, Mr. Smooth, was flattered by an invitation to the feast. It was an unwonted compliment, to put him in a good humor with himself and all mankind.

Many years after, Mr. Smooth sometimes narrated with much complacency how it happened he purchased the beauty. How he had been down town in the morning ; how he counted on Broadway the red flags, and "Beware-of-mock-auction" placards, as he drove back ; how he heard an organ-grinder discoursing street-music, which recalled his



infancy, and the nursery song of "Will you walk into my parlor said the spider to the fly?" how he laughed at a story he heard of a country girl wanting to purchase "a mock-turtle shell comb—the real mock?" how he wondered if a new dodge of a mock-auction—a real mock of some kind—would not take, and take in the most knowing, ending with a description of the dinner in Balshazzar Place.

Then Mr. Smooth would most minutely branch off into the tedious details of the subsequent disaster, but these need not now be repeated. Everybody read the "extras" issued by the newspapers at the time, headed: "Capsize of a yacht in the Lower Bay. All hands on board drowned. Probable loss of a nurse and two little children. A mother's agony. Five hundred dollars reward offered for any information respecting the fate of the children."

But to return to the Druidoaks. The Honorable Mr. Dryvis, being thus bereaved of his lovely Bonanza by the sale to Mr. Smooth, looked around in his inconsolable deprivation for another to supply the void in his affections. Taking the governess and Trenk with him, he went to Newport; for the vacation had commenced in college. A regatta was spoken of; the waters of Newport and Nahant would soon be alive with sailing craft and sea serpents. The banker, however, had no intention ostensibly of investing in any more shipping. He said he had enough of it, and the fashionable world believed him. But somehow the fashionable world, far-famed for wisdom, took it into their sagacious heads that his rich nephew, who was with him, had a great plethora of bank bills perpetually welling out from his watch fob, and that all the pumping, both night and day, with his thumb and forefinger would never get under the leak of this immense volume of fifty dollar notes.



It was soon perceived this young gentleman—a very fast, very handsome, very quiet fellow, who waltzed better than a dancing master, who sang most beautifully with a piano accompaniment, to show off his large diamond finger-ring—affected the salt water pursuits of Christopher Columbus, coming to Newport as a sort of Palos in search of a vessel to bear him and his fortunes on to conquest and glory. Yet one fact was looked upon as odd in the youth; he was so tied to the apron-string of his English cousin, that he would take no sailing excursions without her. Invitations, however, to all the yachts flowed in upon them thick and fast, which were right cheerfully accepted. Jolly times were had on board when they went. The two cousins were pleased with everything, admired everything, enchanted everybody. But still the young, quiet, but fast young gentleman, made no proposals to purchase. Possibly he was frightened, as quite a number of beautiful craft that he seemed to fancy did not please their owners, who spoke very disrespectfully but confidentially to him about their property, and for one reason or other wanted to sell to build others; something was wrong about the jib, or too heavy or too light in the spars, too deep in the water, or not sharp enough for fast sailing, or too large, or too small, or schooner-rigged, or sloop-rigged; in short, nobody was pleased with his yacht. But still they confessed that in the club they stood high, and were undoubtedly splendid for any one who “liked that sort of thing.” One of the greatest pleasures of yachting seems to be the constant desire to build or alter.

Nathan Trenk made his own observations on every yacht he visited, and gave the results of his surveys to Miss Howard, who generally agreed with him. Two or three fine vessels attracted his admiration in particular, one of



which could be purchased; but he did not make an offer to the owner. The others exhibited to him for sale he got rid of by inquiring "the figure" wanted for them, and then quietly declaring the price "*topped his pile.*" The exact columnar altitude of a young man's ingots is not generally discovered until he has passed through the alembic of a few sporting seasons. The Jim Crack, however, was the one he had set his heart upon, and which the banker and governess were anxious for him to purchase. But the Jim Crack was one of the largest and most expensive schooners in the market; insomuch that the owner, or rather owners, despaired of effecting a sale after Trenk's figurative financial statement. It is true the phrase "topping a pile" in money matters is an imaginary unknown quantity. Topping a pile is more brief than a bank exhibit supported by the affidavit of a cashier; but, being as lucid and reliable, may be very properly entitled to as much respect.

The managing owner of the Jim Crack, in a friendly conversation with Nathan over the after-dinner wine and walnuts, regretted that the price of the yacht was found too high for the student's mark, as he knew the vessel could be had at a bargain.

"What do you call a bargain?" Trenk inquired.

"Twelve thousand dollars," was the reply.

"I never intended to purchase at that figure."

"What, then, is your limit, Mr. Trenk?"

"I have no limit, nor am I certain I shall purchase at all."

"Would you entertain a proposition if I offered her for a few thousand less? The owners are anxious to sell, and will do so at a sacrifice."

Trenk replied he wished to know the lowest sum in the



morning, and he would then consult the banker before coming to a decision.

Finally, the Jim Crack was purchased by the Honorable Mr. Dryvis at a bargain; and in due time it became apparent the young snob, with the large diamond ring on his finger and nabob uncle at his elbow, and stylish English cousin on his arm, knew how to navigate the schooner in any wind or in any state of the tides and weather.

But it created no slight sensation at Newport when it was known that Mr. Trenk, the rich, quiet, handsome, but fast young gentleman, who waltzed better than a dancing master, and sang songs and played on the piano divinely, had purchased the Jim Crack. It was all the talk that evening, at one of the largest and gayest hops of the season. Trenk was there, and his cousin Miss Howard, and his uncle the Honorable Mr. Dryvis, all in the most amiable of moods. How Cousin Nathan did waltz with the pretty ladies, and how Cousin Nathan did sing the most plaintive, sweetest airs in the music-room, until the young girls almost drowned him with tears, and until the matrons wanted to smother him with kisses. Did not Miss Howard enjoy all this? Did she not remember who assisted in making him equal to this exhibition? And did she not perceive that her influence and guidance enabled him to bear his honors thick but meekly on him? Cousin Nathan, too, the poor orphan out-cast, forgot not his position in that fascinating, fashionable crowd. He was not carried away by the compliments and admiration lavished upon him; but rising as he ended one of Moore's melodies, and almost blushing at the notice he had attracted, left the room. A buzz of approbation was heard, almost swelling into loud applause, in that gay assemblage, at the pleasure his presence and performance had given.



That evening will be long remembered by many as one of the happiest scenes at this summer resort.

Trenk's thoughts, however, were soon far away to the newly-purchased yacht. That was the mistress of his affections, where his leisure moments were engaged. The regatta was soon to come off, while the vacation still lasted, where the *Jim Crack* was entered, and where the young gentleman, with the consent of the Honorable Mr. Dryvis, intended to exhibit his nautical science to bear off the prize. He put himself and the yacht in training for the event, trying the *Jim Crack* on every tack, in every state of the tides, with the banker, governess, and children on board; sailing over the racing ground frequently, and by and with the advice and experience of the coasting salts, becoming familiar with the currents, eddies, rocks, tides, and other local information essential to success.

But Trenk became convinced his yacht was not destined to win the palm, as she wanted some improvements to make her perfect. He stated the case fairly to the banker, who smiled at Nathan's confidence in his own opinion; but urged the young student still to try his best. The regatta came off with the result Nathan anticipated. The *Jim Crack* was handled to admiration, under a tolerable fair wind. The backers of the yacht among the betting gentlemen were delighted with her, as she came out much ahead of their calculations, although not first in the race, and consequently all won who laid wagers properly on her. With the utmost complacency they pocketed their winnings, and complimented the banker on the qualities of the yacht and the skill of the sailing-master.

The Honorable Mr. Dryvis, Miss Howard, and the children had gone on board a steamboat along with a select party to



witness the race. The day was clear, the wind fair, and the weather charming. The observations made by the knowing ones around the banker put him in the best spirits and in the best possible humor with Trenk. Everybody admitted he was a capital sailor; and everybody could not believe it possible one so young, so fond of dancing and music, such a pet of the ladies, could be so perfect in navigating the *Jim Crack*.

A succession of entertainments consequently followed on board the yacht, at which the banker presided, assisted by Miss Howard, to take care of the ladies, where Nathan attended to everybody. A great many persons thereby, from New York and other places, became agreeable, valuable acquaintances, whom he was destined to meet hereafter. The people whom you know in yachting circles are generally those whose intimacy you can cultivate with safety elsewhere.

Thus ended the season at Newport. The banker and his family returned to Druidoaks. Trenk went back to his boys and to college. The young student had now gained for himself a prominent place in the notice of the banker. Many would have supposed the Honorable Mr. Dryvis entertained for him unbounded esteem, a solicitous regard for his welfare. In fact he considered himself the young man's generous benefactor upon the strength of Nathan's becoming invaluable to him as a companion and instructor of his children, as well as a pleasing, useful associate in dispensing the hospitalities to the distinguished and even foreign visitors, who were guests at the villa. If Trenk deemed himself under a mountain of obligations to the banker, he was by no means prodigal in the manifestations of concern for this Alpine load upon his shoulders. He was not alarmed at the impending weight pressing him into insignificance. Gra-



titude at least is seldom a disquieting emotion, and, like the misfortunes of friends, is borne with much calm, complacent philosophy. But Nathan was not conscious of much gratitude being due. It is well known that an instinct in infants enables them to discover their true friends, and this instinct clings longer to children whose fate has made their spring-time of life unfortunate and unhappy. Tender sensibilities only expand in the warm atmosphere of kindness and in gentle nurture, while the sunshine of his boyhood had been perpetually dimmed by the rough usage he had met with in his constant associations with persons of no kindred ties and affections for him. It is true his material wants had been well supplied. But the hand of gentleness never smoothed his little pillow, nor the eye of sorrowing maternal pity beamed upon his fever or fitful slumbers. Trenk had sometimes met with attention, and more especially a careful consideration for his wants and interests; but the beaming smile, the reflex of overflowing tenderness of the heart, had rarely been his lot. It was therefore in his nature to detect the counterfeit of disinterested friendship, however thick might be the gilding, or however wealthy the hand by which it was bestowed. Indeed, a certain philosopher-stone has not yet been found whereby the cheap copper currency of compliments, the small change of social intercourse, can be transmuted into the bright, pure, golden coin of truth.

He did not consequently cling with youthful generosity to this rich benefactor, nor did he trust that inconsiderate indiscretions would be overlooked or pardoned. But he was fascinated with the society in which he was thrown at the villa; he was slightly in boyish love with the governess, and had a world of affection for the novel-reading matron of the establishment. Quiet as he was in temperament, cautious



from habit and from the peculiarity of his position, he was constantly observant of what was proper under all circumstances. He was picking up the crumbs of refinement in manners, language, taste and thought, and opinions which fell from the educated people around him, and in time he accumulated a store equal to the possessions of those whom he was accustomed to view as his superiors.

But he had another source of pleasure, of real happiness within himself, untold to any one save to the governess, his general confidant. However attractive might be the society at the villa, with its brilliant conversation, and however agreeable the interviews with Doctor Sempronius, yet he knew the time was coming when he would leave all these for other scenes and other company. And he longed to be out upon these other scenes, to take part in the battle of life; and he had already determined in what profession he would be found. He would be a lawyer, and one of a high order for talents, learning, and eloquence. It may be the affection he had for Walter Parker first decided him to choose that vocation; but in time he became ardent in his aspirations, and longed to commence his legal studies.

This bent of mind saved him from becoming an indolent voluptuary, a fawning sycophant among the delightful people with whom he associated. He was naturally independent in disposition, self-reliant, and, above all, the place upon his cranium usually assigned to the bump of veneration, was marked by a slight indentation, denoting the absence of that organ. Doctor Sempronius knew what his aspirations were; he knew also every trait of character he possessed. When, therefore, the young student intimated to the venerable President that a certain branch of collegiate learning would be useless to him hereafter in his profession, and another



science could not help him as an orator, and another textbook would be ignored in his law studies, the Doctor replied: "You are wrong, my good fellow; learn all, learn everything now; its utility will be discovered hereafter. You must gain mental strength by the equal exercise of all your intellectual faculties, and then you can the more easily excel in any one science. In training gladiators for the arena they were not taught the sword exercise alone, but to run, to leap, to walk, and hurl massive stones; all the muscles were put in play, and all were equally vigorous."

"But, Doctor, that was in ancient times, when martial training was more severe than now."

"Be it so, my son; well, then, ask the first recruiting-sergeant of the American army if he will enlist a strapping young man who is an excellent marksman, without taking an inspection of the teeth, fingers, toes, and veins of his legs."

"It may be so," Trenk replied; "but such is the adherence to precedent, habits, and customs, that we see very few great original minds free from the trammels of routine who could correct all this, for it ought to be corrected."

"Wrong again, my good fellow; the world is not in need of what you call great original minds; great strength of faculties will create originality in their exercise, and strike out new modes of thinking and acting. Proper originality is only improvement on the past, as correct theory is always founded on practice, or as imagination upon memory. Learn everything, for you will find the use of it when you become a lawyer; and when you study law, do not discard any kind of law-learning as old and useless, or, in your wisdom, because it is nonsense. No, no, my son; have a great reverence for musty parchment, snuff the odors of black letter-type with all the love you bear for the perfumes of



‘Jockey Club,’ and wrap yourself thick in the dusty cobwebs of your profession. It may be disagreeable and dirty work: apprentices are set at disagreeable and dirty work. When you have gained intellectual strength from your constant mental exercise in kicking and striking the antiquated legal meshes, perhaps you may grub yourself out to a higher flight. Remember, what the world thinks right, generally is right. A young man ought to try to find out the reason for the belief, instead of striving to run counter to the world. A reverence for all things at twenty, often makes a great man at forty. But one of your original minds in youth remains an original for life, a fool or confirmed oddity at fifty.”

The reverend Doctor convinced the student that his immature intellectual culture stood in need of more artificial development in the regions round about the cerebral organ of veneration. Henceforth Nathan endeavored to discover the utility of all text-books; he no longer underrated their value. In entering the fashionable circle of the villa, he conformed more rigidly to the etiquette and usages of society. He entertained a much more humble opinion of his own wisdom.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

FOUR years at length rolled round with their changes, noted in the preceding chapters. Walter Parker had in some respects changed also. He was, however, the same in stature, being diminutive in size, with small feet and hands, of which he was quite vain. In his dress he would have been a fop, had his taste corresponded with his wishes. After



several failures with the most expensive clothes, he wisely gave up the attempt to rival some young friends whose cultivation of external appearance far outshone his abortive efforts. He therefore, in a short time, subsided into a neat, dapper little somebody, whose dress was always fashionable, but never the subject of especial notice. Poor Walter could never understand why his costume was not admired equally with that of some others whose intellects were none of the brightest—especially as his wardrobe cost as much. But that same intellect of his was the very obstacle in the way of success in fashionable externals. Walter wished to dress well, but his wishes could not call up a little fairy to gratify him without he knew the incantation by which she was to be invoked. Had he spent sleepless nights in meditating on colors, shirt-frills, neck-ties, perfumes, hair-dressing, gloves, and shoe-leather; had he awaked to devote days to the contemplation of his complexion and figure in a large mirror; and had he observed for months the style of other gentlemen who had the reputation of leaders in the art, perhaps he would have learned the spell so few really possess.

Walter hastily concluded he could gratify his fashionable aspirations with the same ease that old Mother Hubbard provided for the wants of that poor dog, so well known in history. He went to the tailors to buy a fine coat, and when he came back he was as much disappointed with it as the celebrated old dame having the empty larder. Had he studied the moral of that nursery tale, he would have known money may be squandered without pleasing any one—yourself included.

But a new style of habiliments about this time came into notice—a style which Walter could not applaud. Instead of the cassimeres, broadcloths, and other fabrics delicately



woven, horse-blanket goods and Indian Mackinaw woollens of the roughest patterns seemed to be adopted by the popular taste for the street, for morning calls, and even for little entertainments in the evening. It looked as if grooms, porters, cartmen, and grocers, and car-drivers, and coachmen had invaded the most unexceptionable parlors; and with the advent of their livery, it was surmised, with some truth, they brought corresponding bad manners. To render the illusion complete, some of these exclusives were sons or grandsons of tradesmen; and as the family features were inherited with the family fortunes, the shop lounge, the coach-box swagger, or the hostler shuffle, came along with the paternal coat and countenance, bearing the same striking resemblance to their progenitors which a Durham calf bears to a Durham cow—a little more clean and glossy, but withal shagged, rough, and ungraceful.

A fine coat may conceal or draw off attention from coarse lineaments, and tone down vulgar eccentricities in deportment; but a gross sack-covering on the shoulders, and bag-shaped garments on the legs, draw out ancestral instincts suggestive of oats, bran, chopped corn, and condiments to feed animals. In truth, municipal regulations were soon required compelling car-conductors, policemen, porters, and hack-drivers to exhibit a badge, to obviate confusion in discriminating between plebeians and rich men's plebeian heirs affecting the patrician, while wearing clothes their forefathers might have worn in their humble avocations. Clumsy boots now walked into drawing-rooms in appropriate fellowship with black finger-nails; and hands innocent of intercourse with soap and water, revealed their blood as belonging to the great unwashed.

The fault with Walter was that his leisure moments were



not devoted to meditations on dress, but to other mental exercises of a higher order, imparting more pleasure. He had read much of all kinds of literature; indeed, too much for proper legal training. And now, instead of turning over law maxims in his brain, he was inclined to call to memory choice extracts in prose and in poetry—to ruminate upon them, to admire them, or to try to improve them by some new reading. He had occasionally produced a few verses of his own composition, which his worthy uncle, in his lifetime, read with grim satisfaction, declaring “they were not good enough ever to spoil him for the law.” Walter took the hint from this compliment, and, like another celebrated light of the profession, bade farewell to his muse; that is, he divorced himself from her so far as to put her on a separate maintenance, and his uncle rejoiced thereat. But yet Walter would often return to his first love. His library up town, well filled with literature, especially poetry, was one of his great attractions. He spent his evenings in sight of his books, even when he did not read; for he had some misgivings of conscience whenever he touched them.

He had also been cautioned by his uncle about his loquacity, as an impediment to success in business. Walter received this advice in the spirit in which it was given; and, after due reflection, came to the conclusion the senior counsellor was right in the matter. Yet his mother encouraged him in it, until talking had become a confirmed habit. To reform this foible was difficult, almost impossible; but, with a strong will, he effected it partially. He was cautious, among men of business, to put a check on his tongue; to indulge, however, when he was among intimate friends.

Walter Parker was ambitious to become an orator; nor would he have been averse to the fame of a poet. The fates,



however, had made him a lawyer, and his pride would not permit him to be content with a low standing in his profession. He therefore was attentive to his business, and most careful and laborious in the preparation of his cases. He had hopes of becoming an able advocate, which his few short speeches at the bar flattered, although they had fallen far short of the mark in his own estimation. This was a favorable omen. His father had died many years ago, when Walter was quite young, and he had lived with his widowed mother alone since the decease of his maternal uncle. The fondness of his surviving parent had done much to form his character, both for good traits and for defects. She had been a devoted wife, with a great admiration for the talents of her husband; and she saw in Walter not only a personal resemblance, but the same cast of intellect as his father's. Hence she had encouraged him in talking, being always pleased with whatever he might say. At the same time she made his home so charming that his most agreeable evenings were spent in her company in their spacious house near Union Square. But in order to make her society attractive to her son, Mrs. Parker was not unmindful of the tastes which young people possess, and which they expect to be gratified, as well as having their personal comforts provided for. She was fond of music, and often complimented for her voice and execution on the guitar and piano. Her musical parties were always attractive to many who had no admiration for these entertainments of only one uniform musical sauce, for she very considerably had other pleasures in store for her guests. Hence Walter had a large circle of agreeable acquaintances, and was on the most intimate footing with many of the young beauties of the best society. Yet something uncongenial was in his manner towards the fair sex.



His conversation might be witty and original, but a latent vein of cynicism made them slightly fear him. He was kind, polite, and agreeable; but still, softness of feeling, which ladies expect, was wanting—and its absence they so readily detect. His brilliant imagination and utmost self-composure went far to make him one of the most polite, but also a very impudent, young gentleman. He seemed to care but little for any attentions which might be bestowed on him; nor was he more sensitive as to the favorable reception with which his attentions were received by ladies. If he had preferences among them they were unknown, and it was sagely imagined that those who appreciated his conversation, in all probability had his greatest respect, without any regard to their other merits. A public favorite has seldom any private friends, and that was Walter Parker's position in his gay world up town.

Four years, it has been said above, had passed away since Walter sat in the outer office with Harry Chester. It was now late in autumn, with Walter once more seated in the inner room of the same office, having just come down town, after breakfast. He had not made up his mind how he should begin the labors of the day, as he was not yet in good working harness after his late hours at a brilliant reception last night. He is thinking over the many things, the impertinent things, the fantastical things, the witty things, he had perpetrated in his sprightly sayings in the agreeable evening. From this revery he was roused by a knock at the door, and in walked a well dressed, handsome, tall, and slim young man, hat in hand, with right glove off with which to caress his beaver, as if expecting a cordial welcome. The self-possession of the intruder was only equalled by his easy grace of manner, while the sweet smile that played on his lip, still in infant innocence of a downy moustache, served as an excuse to



display his beautiful teeth in all their whiteness and regularity. It might be doubtful if the curling-tongs had not this morning passed through his dark-brown hair, from the symmetrical but seemingly careless wave of the short curls. No perfume, in fact, was upon his person; but a sort of memory of departed essences clung round his presence, so slight and yet so pleasant as to be indefinable. Not much profusion of trinkets or other jewelry was upon him, although a signet-ring graced his finger, and a gem in the head of a fragile cane was occasionally tapped against his teeth. His clothes were in keeping with the fancy articles with which he was adorned, being in excellent fit, color, and taste.

Walter had fully made these observations before any recollection of the face of his young visitor dawned upon his memory. His look of uncertainty caused the young man to exclaim: "Mr. Parker, do you not know me?"

"Not know you!" answered Walter, with a sudden recollection flashing through his mind; "not know you! Tunc—Trenk—by all that is beautiful and snobbish! Come to my arms, my pretty humming-bird, even if I do take off some of the down;" and they threw themselves into each other's embrace.

"And now tell me," said Walter, "where you have come from, how you have been, and what is to become of you. I know you have graduated at college with high honors, and all that sort of thing. But who ever heard before of a plodding scholar going through a course of mathematical chalk, chemistry and charcoal, differential calculus, conic sections, and slate pencils, to the tune of 'I'd be a Butterfly?' Why, my charming fellow, this is not the toggery you wore down among the dead men of antiquity. As the advertisements say, you are 'got up regardless of expense.'"



It would be impossible to describe the pleasurable sensations this kind welcome on the part of Walter produced in his young visitor. At first with difficulty he suppressed the tears welling up into his eyes, which were visibly moistened at the cordial greeting; but other thoughts were awakened as Walter poured forth with volubility his questions, in the same style that Tunc loved to remember in years gone by. Ah! it is seldom we return to a friend after a long absence to find him the same as we delighted in our reminiscences to picture him. This, however, was Nathan's happy lot; nor can any event in life impart more happiness.

Walter Parker perceived, under his young friend's quiet exterior, still the same deep feeling, and along with it a lurking vein of fun, that made him relish kindness, even when expressed in sprightly badinage. He had heard of Trenk's high position and honors, won in a very large class distinguished for talents, industry, and acquirements. He had expected him to return a most conceited and disagreeable fledgling, neither man nor boy, but hateful to both men and boys; throwing off youthful associations without having as yet acquired manly habits; with ideas and opinions the most intolerant in themselves, and consequently with vanity, conceit, and manners the most intolerable to all others. One glance, however, enabled Parker to rightly estimate his character, without waiting for the expression of his opinions. He thought, most naturally, of the forlorn condition of the young man, with the mystery still hanging over his birth and parentage. But now was not the time to talk seriously on that subject; although Parker felt it incumbent on him to make some allusion to the past.

"No tidings yet, Tunc, of your venerable father, who must long to clasp you to his bosom?"



"I have heard nothing further since I left New York, as you remember, of my parents; nor do I intend to make any search for them. I leave that knowledge to fate and to time. I am afraid I shall never know."

"Surely, some one must have information which would give you a clue to discovery."

To this Trenk made no reply, as he slowly smoothed his hat with his glove.

"Is it possible that any one can be so cruel as to keep you in ignorance in a matter of so much moment?"

Still no answer came from the young man.

"I would demand of them to tell me all, even if I had to clap a pistol to their heads," said Parker, with some excitement.

Trenk raised his eyes, meeting his gaze, and calmly remarked: "This is a subject I may think much upon, but it is one on which I do not wish ever to converse. My birth and parents are as much a mystery to me as to you. But I am afraid I shall never have it explained. Perhaps it is for the best, or at least I will try to believe so."

"Is it, then, disagreeable to hear any allusion to it?"

"Not from you, Mr. Parker. You can make your own comments on the matter; but I cannot join in them."

"I had supposed it possible that it might be painful."

"Not in the least."

"But, my dear fellow, to have it said that you are without parentage, illegitimate, perhaps, will affect your position in the world, and consequently your happiness."

"I have thought of that. I have yet to gain a position with, first of all, some success in my profession. If the world are to form their estimate of me from the circumstance of my birth, I am without any motive for action or exertion.



But I hope for the best, and believe I will have friends if I make myself worthy of them."

"Spoken like a hero—like an orator from the Pewter Mug at a mass meeting. It is sublime, rather lofty; but ground and lofty speeches, you know, don't pay, except at the Bowery Theatre. Pray tell me what profession do you adorn, or what is it to be?"

"I intend to be a lawyer."

"A lawyer!" Parker exclaimed, in astonishment. "You had better look over all the trades in the city directory, and choose some one of them before starting on the hopeless path of a lawyer. Try buffalo-hunting on the prairies, or another light occupation. Do not bury yourself in the city. Intermural interments are forbidden by law, and the alarming invasion of crowding sinners, poor and seedy counsellors from ruraldom, brings lawyers within the equity of the statute. No, my boy; go to some new country to grow up with it, which, to be sure, requires years of vegetation. But when you are a rich, respectable esculent, winning golden pippin opinions from all sorts of small potatoes in agricultural fairs, you may provide for the winter and move to this necropolis; not before. 'Perpetrate folly at the end of life, not at the outset,' saith the new version of the proverbs."

"Some succeed in the profession, Mr. Parker. They tell me you are very successful."

"But I did not make myself. My uncle, my father, were advocates, and I have come into their business. But you have not even a friend, an outsider, to help you. What do you say to that?"

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," quoted Nathan. "Let me first be admitted to the bar."

"But how are you to live in the meantime?"



To this question Trenk made no answer.

"Well, it is strange," continued Walter, in half soliloquy. "I wish I could find this place where some people, without a father's check-book to feed them like young robins, can dig up gold to pay current expenses. I wonder where mother earth keeps her pocket? No father, no mother, no friends—but yet in funds. Pray tell me, Tunc, what institution do you bless and beautify with your bank account?"

"I am afraid extravagance will equal my income, to leave no balance on hand."

"Then you have an income? I am glad of that. As for friends, they will increase in number, they will swarm into a pestilence, if you are one of the Wall street firm of Tubal Cain and Company, dealing in the precious and ponderous minerals. Under these circumstances, you can safely study a profession, and you shall have my paternal benediction in starting."

Trenk smiled in silence, as he rose to take his leave.

"Come," said Walter, "I am not to be got rid of so soon. You must dine with me this evening, and here is my address."

"I am grateful for your kindness," Nathan replied, pressing Walter's hand, "and hope I have a friend in you—for I need one."

"That you have, my good fellow—especially since you have money. But stay! Hold on a minute—I have something more to say. Now, what is it about?" putting his finger on his nose in a thoughtful mood; then, raising his head, added: "Oh, now I have it. It was about a young fellow of your name, Trenk—yes, Trenk—who periodically is to be seen down the coast, off Newport and Nahant, like the sea-serpent, and seems to produce as great sensation.



Some of my friends speak of him as an acquaintance of theirs. He is young and handsome, rich, English, stylish, and fast filling a private female cemetery; for he is, they say, certain death among the young ladies. Now, what I was going to observe is this: Being of the same name, which is not a common one, and from abroad, perhaps he might give you some ancestral information. In fact, that mortality he is said to create among crinoline has such a family resemblance to your worthy father's weakness, in the Lothario line of business, that I would not wonder if you were descended from the same stock. Who knows? Perhaps this young Briton, born on the other side of the ocean, may find in you a relative born on the other side of the blanket."

Nathan resumed his seat while Walter was imparting this unexpected information. He felt inclined to laugh outright at the complimentary allusion to his yachting excursions, which he supposed were unknown to Parker. But, on a moment's reflection, he doubted whether it was not told seriously. Walter, perceiving his perplexity, but not understanding the cause, continued:

"I have picked up all I could learn about this cockney, and, from the accounts, he is cutting it rather fat for so young a chap; fast horses, expensive feeds, *fêtes champêtres*, to say nothing of champagne punch, boat-racing and regattas; and for repose, by way of seclusion and solitude to refresh himself, little private suppers, ending in a quiet game of poker, without limit in the betting. Then, again, he has the best of tippie in his rooms, the most expensive cigars in the side-pocket of his shooting-jacket, handles a billiard-cue to perfection, and can make ten strikes on the pins all day long. But I need not tell you more; dogs, guns, yachts, horses, and so forth, especially the so forth, will do much in a short



time to make a young man popular as a prime minister; moreover, I may add they will soon give truth to his virtuous epitaph: 'And he died poor.'"

Trenk listened in amazement to this caricature, nor was he less astonished when he perceived that Parker was not jesting; for it was evident he believed all that he said without the least suspicion the college boy before him had, in his visits, furnished the material for this fanciful sketch.

"From whom, may I ask, Mr. Parker, did you receive this wonderful story?"

"The story is not at all wonderful; it is an every-day affair. But this snob has been running the thing into the ground, and therefore is more talked about. From all accounts, he must have been coming it rather athletic. But see here, I will show you his picture in print."

"In print!" exclaimed Nathan, starting in terror from his seat.

"Yes, in print," answered Walter, opening a drawer and taking out a bundle of miscellaneous memoranda, from which he extracted a portion of a newspaper neatly labelled. "Here is the letter of a special correspondent to one of our dailies from Newport, which I laid aside to send to you, had I not forgotten the matter. You may read it for yourself, as it is a pretty fair photograph from a fashionable correspondent. Somehow these newspapers are always ahead in furnishing us with the pictures of great people before they grace the rogues' gallery of the detective police."

Nathan eagerly seized the slip of newspaper and read as follows:

"THE fascinating young Englishman, whom I mentioned in my last, has left us. He weighed anchor at flood-tide this



morning, and with his rich uncle the banker, and charming cousins on board, set sail for this season. Beneath the thick aristocratic crust of his national reserve, there was much frankness and good feeling in his manners. His English hauteur, with moustache and imperial, at first were prejudicial to his favorable reception among the gentlemen. But in time these were overcome, and before he left, all were his friends. I happened to see him frequently in a few select circles, and therefore, *sub-rosa*, I can write knowingly about him. His coming abroad at all was owing to a slight disagreement with his *paterfamilias* on a literary question. The old governor entered him at All Souls College at Oxford; but about the same time, his club of 'whole souls' entered a three-year-old at the Derby for the sweepstakes. The gown had to give way to the gaiters, and the spirited young fellow threw aside all books, except his betting-book. In that, unfortunately, were found, after the race, some awful figures on the wrong horse; he lost a pot of money and had come to grief. As he could not come to time on settling day, he had to cut and run for it. This is the reason he took a new line of country. They say in sporting circles his rich banker-uncle will make it all right on the Derby, if he will only marry his cousin, to whom he is very attentive. In the meantime he has been able to raise plenty of funds from some friends at home, but he don't say from whom. The story of the yacht being palmed off upon him at four times its value is a *canard*. He had to take it or get nothing; as debts of honor, if not paid promptly, can only be collected at twenty paces; that is the statute distance—the statute of limitations in such cases. As I am the first to instruct the natives here in the knowledge of letters,

I remain, &c. CADMUS."



As Nathan folded up the paper and handed it back, Walter remarked: "A nice young man truly for a small party! You ought, however, to see him, as he is of a liberal turn of mind, and might enlighten you. There is such worldly keenness withal about his libertinism and prodigality that he must be clever as well as highly accomplished. His extravagance is a species of insanity, with yet a method in his madness. By all means see him if you can. He is not yet through his peccadillos, when his peck of troubles will commence."

Before Trenk could reply, the door was opened by some one on business, and as Nathan took his departure, he recognized the gentleman entering as an acquaintance whom he had seen at the Druidoaks. Hastily shaking hands with him, he passed on to the street.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

ABOUT an hour after the interview mentioned above, Walter Parker was walking slowly up and down his rooms in a very thoughtful mood. The tip ends of his fingers were inserted in the pockets of his pants, and his eyes were directed to his shoes, as if solving the problem of the possibility of walking on his ankles, while he was bending his feet right and left in making the experiment. A perplexed man, you may well opine, was that young lawyer. The client who the moment before had quitted the office, informed him that Nathan Trenk was that heartless Cockney snob, rich, extravagant, profligate, gambling, keen libertine, and rake, whose



life and times Walter had been embellishing in those choice, pleasant, biographical reminiscences to the interesting person himself.

"Sold, sold!" were the first exclamations of a soliloquy that burst involuntarily from his lips. "Sold by a Peter Funk! And that is not the worst of it; I do not know who has become my purchaser. Where am I, what am I, and, above all, who is he?" Here he recalled hastily to his mind all he knew of the young man, and all he had learned of his exploits at Newport. The truth was an enigma not consistent with itself; how much more, then, was he confused by the fictions of his sporting career, which he fully believed, for he had not questioned the reports when they first reached him.

Walter Parker was inclined at all times to mystify others, for the amusement it afforded him in watching their doubts and mental embarrassments. It might be said to be his favorite pastime to weave fiction and fact on the chain of his brilliant fancy, until it was impossible to separate one from the other. Therefore he felt like a spider caught in his own web. The entanglement was complete.

"Well, well," he muttered at last, "I give it up. There is a screw loose somewhere. He is deep—deep as ever plummet sounded. I'll take another look at the Arabian Nights or Tales of the Genii. But if I do, I will believe them, after this wonderful story of the charity boy, the nephew of the rich banker, punching anthracite in the back office for five dollars a month and playing poker for thousands, with yachts as stakes; sleeping on oyster shells for want of a bed, and snubbing the aristocracy at Newport. If I ask him to explain, he will deny it all, with the proof positive on my side; or, more probably, with his German



phlegm, he will say nothing, as he has a very retentive mouth as well as memory. There is no use putting questions, when he knows so well how to hold his tongue."

In the evening, punctual to his engagement, Nathan presented himself, and found Walter in his snug little library. It was not long before his mother entered, to whom Nathan was introduced as his young friend just graduated at college. The lady at first was inclined, in the goodness of her heart, to be patronizing in her manner to her guest, in order, as she supposed, to render him more at his ease. But the grace and modest assurance with which Nathan met her advances indicated such a knowledge of the usages of refined society, that she was charmed with her son's agreeable acquaintance. At dinner Nathan was reserved as usual; but his respectful, quiet manner, as well as his evident appreciation of Walter's remarks, who had almost all the conversation to himself, went far to win the favorable opinion of the fond mother.

As he rose from the table to leave, the hostess insisted on his remaining, as this was one of her reception evenings.

"Above all," said Walter, "remain to brew some punch, as it has been forgotten until now. I suppose, Nathan, you know some of the useful arts, as well as all of the ornamental?"

Trenk laughingly replied that, on an emergency, he might make a palatable drink.

"Well, here," said Walter, "are the groceries; so you may begin," and led him into another apartment for that purpose.

While Nathan was tasting, mixing, and stirring the ingredients in the huge punch-bowl, Walter was incessantly talking, as usual, and plying him with questions.

"I see," said he, "you understand the due proportions in



large quantities. You must have learned the art at some distillery. Were you ever in the rectifying business in the liquor trade? But won't you take a cigar?"

Nathan said he never smoked.

"On a moderate calculation, Nathan, how many gallons of punch have you ever made?"

"Some hogsheads," was the answer.

"You must be fond of the article."

"I never drink it."

"No! It is best not, if you are going to take a hand at cards."

"I suppose so; but I never played cards."

"Then what is your favorite game?"

"Canvas back ducks, in season."

"No, no; I don't mean that. What do you play when you gamble?"

"I never gambled in my life. I have had neither time, knowledge, money, nor inclination for that."

"Then how the deuce did you spend your time?"

"With the children, for the most part."

"I suppose you would say you spent your money with them also?"

"The money that was spent did not come out of my pocket. I saved mine for a rainy day."

"Tell me, while I think of it—what are the expenses of a yacht for a season, Nathan?"

"Well, with economy, I suppose about the same amount which it would cost to build one. But it was left to others to foot up our bills, and therefore I cannot say exactly how much we spent each season."

"Then, when you marry that pretty cousin of yours, and that rich banker-uncle comes down with the needful, you will know."



"I wish, Mr. Parker, you knew that cousin of mine, as you call her. I am sure she would like you."

"Thank you, my fine fellow. - You are both generous and complimentary."

It is needless to pursue this conversation, as it ended in Walter's belief of Trenk being all that was reported of him at Newport. That about the children was fiction, of course; and the negation of smoking and gambling being graceful denials of vices which he was not bound to admit. On the other hand, Nathan imagined Walter had been undeceived by the gentleman in the morning, and was making fun out of the newspaper sketch.

Nathan was now looking intently into the enormous punch-bowl, with his thoughts wandering off to the Druidoaks, when the word "deep," from Walter's lips caught his ear.

"Yes, deep," said he, supposing Walter alluded to the punch measure; "but rather strong, I should think."

"Very cool withal," Walter replied; "prepared with the highest art; fresh, sweet, and seductive; enough to make the ladies talk."

"But not enough to do them any harm.,"

"That depends, Nathan, upon their taste. Only furnish them something rich and spicy, their fancy will fill up the picture to suit themselves. Put only a secret at the bottom of that bowl, and they will drink all the liquid to reach it, although they may lose themselves in the intoxication of the search."

Trenk, looking up in his face at this unexpected sentiment, discovered Walter's gaze fixed on him, and exclaimed: "I do not know, Mr. Parker, what you mean."

"Truth, they say, Nathan, lies in a well. Why not, then,



in a punch-bowl? I can see a resemblance to your features in this liquor."

"If you are moralizing," said Nathan, tasting the punch, "why not give me the whole sermon, as I cannot follow your argument from the heads only of your discourse."

When the company assembled, the two gentlemen descended from the library to the drawing-rooms, now well crowded with guests. Nathan's entrance created some sensation and some curiosity among the ladies. "Who is he?" and "Where from?" were the universal inquiries, which were easily answered, of his being a graduate of college and about to study law in New York. One or two of the gentlemen had met him at a regatta on his yacht, and at once his position in society was established. The ladies all implored Walter, in the same strain and in the same words: "Do bring him with you to see us," which of course was faithfully promised.

As the evening wore on, waltzing was proposed, in which Nathan took part, greatly to the delight of several young ladies whom he selected as partners. After that, the buzz of conversation was hushed by the usual admonition to listen, as some music on the piano and harp, accompanied by sweet voices, added a new charm to the entertainment. The hum of approbation was audible throughout the admiring circle as the soft strains died away; while an *encore* was asked and readily agreed upon. The second essay seemed to impart even more pleasure, nor did other performers appear willing to break the spell by an attempt to rival what had been achieved. It was whispered somewhere that Mr. Trenk was a musician, with a highly cultivated voice. The whisper was repeated by several, until all joined in making the same remark. But who would ask him, was the question. Walter would not, because he dreaded a failure; and



several ladies equally dreaded his declining their request. At length a very young lady with whom he had waltzed ventured to propose it to him.

She had been attracted to Trenk on his being presented to her ; but was yet almost too much of a child to be called a young lady, being, it was said, less than sixteen, and diminutive in size and figure. In truth Emma Gray had already seen a year more than was supposed ; but her seclusion from society, the little notice which had been taken of her, as well as her quaint, natural manners, bordering on frankness, and apparently her unsophisticated remarks of childhood, had induced her acquaintances to believe her still a child. Youthful and small, she was withal graceful and well formed ; her features and throat were faultless in their classic symmetry, with jet-black hair and eyes almost too large and piercing, but yet indicative of more moral feeling than passion. Her features, when in repose, betrayed a slight tinge of melancholy ; a sombre cast of thought, which at times verged upon sadness, as though she had already grieved and suffered. But when she spoke, an almost angelic sweetness and purity suffused her countenance, as she threw back her raven tresses in her simple, earnest, innocent conversation. Her parents had long since been dead ; in fact, it was only in her infancy that her mother had impressed a last kiss upon her lips. Since then she had lived with some distant relations, seeing but little society, and not much inclined to cultivate a large circle. When she first beheld Nathan, his figure, dress, graceful manners, and easy, winning conversation, had impressed her favorably ; indeed, he was the most handsome and polished gentleman whom she had ever seen. In a short time she was on the most easy terms with him, and rather astonished at herself. But then he waltzed so well, it



was no exertion when she had him for a partner, and his merry smile had set all her maiden reserve at defiance.

“Will you not sing for us, Mr. Trenk?” inquired she, in a low tone. And perceiving his unwillingness, she added:

“Then will you not for me?” with some emphasis on the last pronoun.

“To be sure I will,” he replied, with a winning smile, as he drew near to the piano with her leaning on his arm.

The crowd around the instrument immediately gave way, and the young lady stood back as Nathan removed his gloves, displaying a large signet-ring. “Now what shall it be, Miss Emma?” said he, seating himself, and running his fingers over the keys.

He felt within himself an unwonted ambition to excel, to surpass the previous performance, and at the same time a great desire to please the little lady at his side. Conscious of his great musical talents, he was at his ease, well knowing he had around him a circle capable of appreciating any choice gem in the art. His self-possession made him, if possible, more graceful than ever, and his modest deportment, along with his other external recommendations, drew all eyes admiringly upon him. His rapid manipulation indicated a complete command of the piano; and it was observed in his careless touches, the sounds of the desultory notes soon began to infuse a mournful, thrilling sadness, a sweet melancholy, that caused the heart to swell and the pulse beat quick. While these sounds were heard one by one, slowly, distinctly, in tender sweetness, like crystal waters flow into golden fountains, each one felt her bosom heave and a tear to moisten her eye, although not one syllable had fallen from his lips. They all wished to prolong these entrancing tones, unwilling the spell should be broken by words, for no words



could be in unison with the blissful emotions thus created without them. At length the sweet strain of music was mingled with some plaintive warblings, so clear, so low in mellow richness and gushing grief, that each one checked her breathing in silent expectation, to catch whatever language could impart to emotions apparently too deep for utterance; and thus the song of the orphan boy began:

Tell, tell me not that youth is bless'd,  
Though to her grave a mother's borne;  
I would I were with her at rest  
To wait in peace a brighter morn.

To rove this world, with none to know,  
With none to soothe or shed a tear,  
Is like the march on Zembla's snow;  
We feel no warmth to keep us here.

To smile with lip, with heart to weep,  
And from the inmost soul to groan;  
To think where a mother may sleep,  
Wishing her mossy bed our own.

Come, come to me, my angel bright,  
Come in my grief, and sadness come;  
To break in joy those clouds of night,  
To quit this earth and take me home.

Then tell me not that youth is bless'd,  
Though to her grave a mother's borne,  
I would I were with her at rest,  
To wait in peace a brighter morn.

Such were the notes with which his soul sighed forth in song. And as the sound of the last word died away, he continued the sweet symphony. He arose at length to receive the smiles and compliments most plentifully bestowed. Walter was too much amazed with the great musical powers ex-



hibited by Nathan to express any opinion, and looked round the rooms in wonder to observe the effect on others. Emma Gray quitted the circle to hide the emotions and sad thoughts these soft and pleasing sounds had vividly awakened. The magical charm of the song had caused a train of reflections in her innocent breast unlike those hitherto produced by music, and no less of touching tenderness than tinged with deep melancholy. Walter's mother said softly to him: "Thank you, Mr. Trenk, you have given us a rich entertainment, and the no less acceptable from its being unexpected."

The good lady was indeed grateful to him, for it is always an important point gained at a reception to exhibit a rare attraction, and, above all others, a musical attraction. It is the great event of the evening, the talk for a month, and an enviable notoriety for a season. Mrs. Parker was therefore duly grateful, as in duty bound. The other ladies were at once all eagerness to learn something of his antecedents, and those gentlemen who had been fortunate to meet him at the regatta, were pressed for information by their fair partners in their flirtations.

It was soon known that Nathan Trenk was a gentleman of fortune, of an old family, and of the most fashionable pretensions. That he was faultless in dress, and handsome, with the most winning manners and perfect accomplishments, they had seen for themselves. But—and there always is a but—he was most extravagant, dissipated, gambling, and worse. There is your passport, with which to enter the world, Nathan. Now go forth and enjoy it if you can.

Walter observed with pleasure the sudden fame and popularity of his young friend; while his silence, when all around were expressing their admiration or astonishment, was attri-



buted to various motives in his incomprehensible character. The music had entranced him, but the song itself contributed no part to the fascination. For, in his critical opinion, the words were not equal to the melody.

"I think you said, Mr. Parker, that Mr. Trenk was a law-student."

"I think, Miss Caroline, I made that truthful statement."

"Why, with his wealth, should he be a lawyer?"

"To increase his store, no doubt, like the ever-busy bee."

"That is a strange whim for one apparently blessed with so many fascinations."

"Perhaps," Miss Caroline, "he is studying law with ulterior views to musical success."

"I do not know of any affinity between music and law."

"What would you say to a new opera, with scenes laid in the feudal ages and founded on the second book of Blackstone, with both music and libretto by Mr. Trenk?"

Miss Caroline opened her eyes at this piece of news.

"No one can predict," added Walter, gravely, "what he may do in his highest flight. Perhaps carry off a beauty under his left pinion."

The young lady turned away laughing, while Walter sought some other fair one to entertain with more enigmas; for his pleasure was ever to leave them in doubt of his being serious in these fancy sketches.

"You have given us a new delight this evening in Mr. Trenk," said the young and pretty widow Malcomb to Walter, as she leaned on the arm of a bride, the witty Mrs. Carson.

"Mr. Trenk would be rejoiced to hear it, if you have not already told him."

"When did you compose that charming sonnet which Mr.



Trenk has sung divinely?" asked Mrs. Carson, the bride, demurely, with affected interest.

"What freak of mental aberration has induced the ever-sensible and lovely matron in bridal costume to make such an inquiry?" he exclaimed.

"The music by Nathan Trenk, the words by Walter Parker. Such is the report Mr. Pactolus is spreading through the rooms," was the bride's answer.

"Indeed," added the young and handsome widow Malcomb, "indeed, the song is the most beautiful you ever wrote."

"Ladies, this latest story of Mr. Pactolus is only one of his many returned convicts, to be once more detected and punished for coming back periodically to impose on innocent, artless, confiding creatures."

"He says you write a great many of such excellent odes," Mrs. Carson remarked.

"No doubt he would declare that every unfortunate poetical cherub that reaches an untimely end and a publisher's graveyard has my name inscribed on its tombstone."

"That would be generous on his part, in making you a voluminous author," suggested the young widow.

"And bound in marble," breathed the young wife in a stage whisper, as a composing anodyne to his nerves.

"Mr. Pactolus loves to quote favorite extracts, culled amid the choicest flowers of verse," said the widow.

"Then he ought to be in Botany Bay for life, where he would find many congenial companions."

"But tell me, sir, is he not truthful?"

"Beauteous Malcomb, never believe him, not even at your feet in a declaration—that first article in the feminine faith where all womanhood are bigots. Trust him not, for you will end a martyr."



"But you did write the song?" laughingly reiterated the bride, as a Parthian arrow, while she retreated smiling and triumphant, escorted by a gentleman.

"They say Mr. Trenk is so wicked," resumed Mrs. Malcomb.

"How fascinating then he must be," Walter remarked, collecting a bevy around him.

"Poor fellow, he must be slandered," sighed the pretty widow.

"Poor fellow, how he must be tempted," sighed Walter in return. "Now if he were a Stoic like me, he might, with strong nerves, be as virtuous."

"Then it is true," she cried inquiringly, "that he is so extravagant and dissipated."

"I never said it, madam; my knowledge of him would teach me that he is an economical, quiet, unpretending, unsophisticated, moral young man. His relations have never been known to speak in other terms!"

"What a provoking wretch you are," exclaimed the widow, "to say this, when you know better."

"My information is not so authentic as that of the ladies, of course; and if, on an intimate experience with him, you should learn better, do, like a good mother Eve, impart the knowledge to me."

Nathan had wandered away to the conservatory with Emma Gray. "Do you sing many such plaintive airs?" she asked.

"Not many, Miss Emma, in company, for they cannot please many."

"But surely you must admire them."

"Yes! When alone I sing them for my own pleasure. I must confess I was sad when I composed the little song."



"Why, then, indulge in such composition if it make you sad?"

"It does not cause my depressing thoughts; on the contrary, music enables me to throw off care and sorrow."

"The world does not suppose that you can have cause for gloomy thoughts."

"Perhaps the world is right, Miss Emma; but still I have them sometimes."

"But you must favor me, sir, with such ballads when I wish them."

"Undoubtedly I will, if you prefer them."

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

It was one of those golden days with the first tints of coming autumn that gild the shores of the Bay of New York, before the summer has departed; while it might be said to linger like a well known beauty who has felt the coming chill that warns of fading attractions. The denizens of the city, still in their sumptuous villas and suburban hotels, were meditating a return to their more luxurious homes, but yet undecided about moving, changing their intentions with every change from storm to sunshine. Some had come back to the city, and all were soon returning.

The evening steamboat had long since left the Battery for Staten Island, and was approaching the Kills which bound the Jersey shore. The upper deck, covered with an awning, was crowded with passengers, whose appearance denoted them all to be of high respectability and consideration. The gentlemen sat in clusters reading the evening papers, or talk-



ing over the current news of the day. The ladies exchanged salutations, and seemed to rest after their exercise in the heat of the dusty streets. A few of the male sex who had relinquished seats to the ladies leaned over the rail in a listless silence, enjoying the scene; while near the bow of the vessel a group of young men, fashionably dressed, had assembled to watch the tide setting in and to enjoy the fresh breeze blowing in with it from the ocean.

They had observed a topsail schooner, with all her canvas set, threading her way through the navy of merchantmen anchored off the Quarantine. The ease and rapidity with which the craft moved along, and the brightness of her sails, reflected by the evening sun, induced them to watch her as she approached.

"That schooner is handled beautifully," said one; "she is not, I suppose, a case for Quarantine?"

"Yes, she is," was the answer; "all coasters are overhauled, even if coming from the North Pole."

"What for? Surely she can have no infectious disease on board."

"All vessels, when approaching Quarantine, become infected with the itch—the itching-palm."

"Is that your last pun, Charley?" inquired the first speaker, laughing.

"I think the boarding-officers would call it poor-wit," said one of the group.

"Look! The schooner does not anchor; she is not a coaster but a yacht," as the vessel flew through the waters among the ships, and heading for the point of the island.

"A yacht!" exclaimed all.

"'Tis the Chula," quietly remarked the young man who was called Charley.



"Yes, it is the Chula."

"But what! Is she going to run aboard?"

At this moment the yacht was almost across the bow of the steamboat, and the passengers on deck could look down upon the sail close under their side. The large yacht, probably of two hundred tons, with all her canvas to the wind, exhibited one of those rare specimens of nautical beauty and skill seldom seen. Her decks, fore and aft, were bright as the driven snow, while every piece of metal glistened like burnished armor. Her spars, sails, and ropes were of the best material, in the best order; and the crew stood at their posts all eager and alert as sailors on a man-of-war. The owner of the craft, known to many on the steamboat, was a wealthy young gentleman of the city. He stood alone, leaning against the mainmast, apparently indifferent to things around him, for the yacht was under the exclusive management of the mate.

"I wonder what pleasure Sabina can have on salt water," Charley remarked, as the sail flew past them, "when he knows nothing about navigation?"

"It is a stretch of courage in him," answered another, "even to venture down the Bay."

"What! Is he such a coward?" was the inquiry.

"Coward! He is afraid of his own shadow; never considers himself safe beyond the reach of his aunt's apron-string. Last summer he was on the Madison up the Hudson when she took fire. In his fright he jumped overboard and was rescued by a yawl picking him up."

"I heard," said another, "that in his fright he did more than the most courageous could do in their senses. But all agreed, as he sat upon a rock on the bank, with his knees nursed in his arms, that he was a most selfish coward."



“That accounts for his being such a milk-sop,” said Charley, “timid as a rabbit and lazy as a cat. I wonder what he lives for?”

While these encomiums were passing, the Chula had tacked, with her course laid for Governor's Island, but still Sabina stood motionless at the mainmast. He was tall and well formed, with long, dark hair, jet-black eyes, but with a slight sinister expression in them. His forehead was narrow and low, his complexion sallow, with irregular teeth and heavy lower jaw. His father, several years deceased, was a Spanish creole of Cuba, who had amassed a fortune in the West Indies. His enemies, and they were many, said he had been in the slave-trade; and others, less or more charitable and candid to be the more cutting, hinted at his association with the freebooters at the Isle of Pines. At all events, his marriage with this young man's mother was in itself an outrage, in abducting her from a boarding-school and taking her abroad without even informing her relatives, until long after, of her fate. She returned at last to New York with her infant son, to implore her sister's kindness for the innocent child, and soon after sank into the grave. Once or twice the father took the boy with him to sea, and then returned him to his aunt to educate. After Sabina became of age he had again visited his plantations in the West Indies; but as these visits were of short duration, it was supposed the half-civilized inhabitants on his estates were unsuited to his effeminate nature.

The sun had not sunk beyond the Bergen hills when the Chula rounded to at Hoboken, her sails fell, a gun fired, and the flag hauled down, as the anchor plunged into the water. Sabina had gone below, but the rapidity with which the sails were clewed and the decks cleared was magical. The mate, an old weather-beaten seaman with grizzly hair and only one



eye, was grim as the ferryman on the Stygian lake. His nation and his nativity were unknown, but the scar across the left cheek was caused by the same cutlass which had deprived him in part of his vision. He spoke a jargon not unlike the patois of French negroes on the Lower Mississippi; nor did he acknowledge an acquaintance with any other language. His wishes and orders seemed to be anticipated by the crew, so rapidly were they executed, while each motion of his hand was recognised by them as some nautical telegraphic signal, to be obeyed promptly. His bronzed and rueful visage was rendered still more startling by long, pendent, gold ear-rings, which adorned either side of his face. His dress was a white linen shirt, with a broad falling collar, and across his breast two massive gold chains were linked to some trinkets of value. Around his waist a broad red silken sash was coiled in several folds, supporting his wide duck pantaloons, and his long, sharp-pointed boots turned up so as not to touch the ground at the toes. He had on a light summer jacket made of sea-grass of the finest texture, and wore a small Panama hat encircled with a narrow crimson ribbon.

As the mate reigned supreme on deck, he had selected for sailors a set of men not unlike himself. These were Lascars, Caribs, and Yuca Indians from the coast of Sisal, whose picturesque costume, no less gaudy than that of their superior, exhibited so many fancy colors as to make one believe it was got up for effect by Sabina.

At the end of the pier at Hoboken two ladies stood waving their handkerchiefs as a signal to the Chula, and instantly a boat put off to bring them on board. As they touched the side of the yacht, the crew grouped themselves at the fore-castle, and, with hats in hand, awaited in respectful silence their stepping on deck.



If Sabina were apprised by the mate, through the speaking-tube, of his aunt and another lady coming, he was very slow in recognising their presence. The two matrons were suffered to seat themselves, to undergo the delicate attentions of the attractive mate, without receiving any sign of recognition from the young gentleman below.

Mrs. Waters, his aunt, had brought with her a lady friend with whom she was intimate, and both received in cold, silent politeness the uncouth civilities of the old sailor. The aunt was not unused to visits on board the *Chula*; and, therefore, quietly awaited the appearance of her nephew. The good lady had been reared in that old school of antiquated manners which checked any exhibition of feeling; she was past middle age, without acquiring that increase of weight usually attending the maturity of life. She was slim and rather above the medium height; dressed with all the neatness and simplicity of a Quakeress, but yet with a richness in the materials not often seen in that sect. She was a good Christian, believing that the forms of the High Church were the only appropriate mode of worship, and she thought of no other. Strict and devoted to her religious duties, she found enough in them to occupy her time, for her family of children were all married, and she was left once more with her husband almost alone in their venerable mansion. Her lady friend, Mrs. Chilton, was another of the same happy frame of mind, and, being also free from worldly cares, they could pursue their matronly meditations in almost inseparable religious harmony:

“Listen to him now,” said the aunt to her friend; “he is amusing himself, and I suppose we must await his leisure.”

At the same instant the voice of a parrot was heard in the



cabin, calling for "a mint-julep," "a gin cocktail," "a brandy smash," "a claret punch," "a sherry cobbler," "make punch, make punch," "don't spoil it with water." As these several calls were made, the aunt turned to the lady and remarked with a quiet smile: "Is not that excellent; could you imagine anything more perfect?"

"Indeed, Madam," was the answer, "I cannot endure those unseemly birds, which are often taught to say improper things."

An angelic smile suffused the countenance of the admiring aunt as she replied: "It is no bird, but an imitation by Nicolas, my nephew himself. But hark," and they listened as a most unearthly scream, such as might come from a steam whistle, was heard, shrill, piercing, prolonged, with a maddening agony, and then gradually subsiding into "more punch, more punch; don't spoil it with water."

Mrs. Chilton was terrified, and involuntarily moved towards the small boat at the side, while the aunt, in silent delight at the performance, pressed her hand and at last said: "Do not be frightened; he tells me that he saw these birds in the tropics of every species, from the size of a wren to a raven, and their cries in the deep jungle are most terrific."

"I should think they were, if that is a specimen," exclaimed the lady, in great alarm.

After some further imitations of other feathered songsters of the forest, the young gentleman deigned to raise his head above the hatchway.

"Come," said the aunt, "we are waiting for your company to escort us home to dinner."

"My dear aunt," replied Sabina, as he stepped to her side, "I wish you to remain and dine on board."

"If we do we will be too late for the lecture of the Rev.



Mr. Mellowtone, at Dr. Brimson's church ; and I know, Nicolas, you would regret to be absent."

"Suffer me to manage that," said the nephew, in a nonchalant manner, escorting them down to the table.

If it were possible that a saint could be tempted by anything earthly, we might imagine such a trial as that which the good aunt had now to undergo. If she had one failing still left that savored of mortal's fallen condition, it was her lingering attachment to the dinner-table. But on the assurance of Sabina that she should hear the lecture, she consented to dine with him, although nearly sundown and the church two miles distant on the avenue. But she knew her nephew would not deceive her ; he was too good for that ; and she heaved a deep sigh as she thought how much more attentive he was to her and to religious instruction than her own children. Not that her own children were not the best in the world, but yet they were not so often her escort to places of devotion and benevolence.

The company were soon seated in the luxurious cabin, where a middle-aged butler, also from the tropics, stood at one side and directed two half-grown boys, with bright olive complexions, brilliant eyes, and glossy, straight dark hair, in their attendance on the guests. The dinner was served with the utmost taste, profusion, and variety ; nor could Mrs. Chilton imagine such skill in cooking was ever equalled in the most voluptuous establishments in the city. The dinner passed off with that stiff formality to which the ladies were accustomed ; scarce a syllable was spoken, and, as the servants were well instructed, the silence of the party was almost unbroken.

The admirable training of Sabina by his aunt had taught him self-control, until it seemed he had no natural traits of character of his own. All appeared artificial in him in which



the rough edges were worn down ; acting only in accordance with the rules of good-breeding, strict etiquette, and the dictates of the lady. That a young man should lead such a cold, monotonous, artificial, although luxurious existence, might well entitle him to the reproach of milk-sop. But to his aunt he appeared the perfection of propriety ; a worthy example even to her own sons, who were somewhat boisterous and demonstrative in their manners. Why could not they be quiet, well behaved, like their cousin ? thought their mother ; and yet the world esteemed them well-bred gentlemen.

Mrs. Waters had not, however, been inattentive to the good things before her. From the soup and salmon she had wandered through pleasant dishes and delicate wines, till she found herself amid a wide-spread dessert served on rich porcelain, where delicious fruits, among which were her choice conservatory grapes in thick clusters, tempted her still to linger.

"I am afraid," gently murmured the good lady at last, "we will be late for the evening service."

"Do not make yourself uneasy ; we will be there in time," said Sabina. "But come and see for yourself." At the same instant they rose and walked on deck. The sun had gone down, and twilight was melting away before the new moon in the west. The Chula had slipped her anchor when they sat down to the table, and, with her sails furled, she had gently drifted with the tide, and now they found themselves opposite Fourteenth street, at the foot of which Sabina's carriage was always at this hour in waiting.

Soon after, the nephew and aunt were seen to enter the church before the service had commenced. As the prim matron walked slowly up the rich carpeted aisle, the nephew most devotionally followed with her prayer-book, while the deep



peal of the organ and the dim religious lights inspired the most holy feelings on all around. They knelt together in evening prayer, and many a father there present wished in his heart that he had a son with such serious thoughts as young Sabina.

The beautiful and solemn service of the church, at all times calculated to inspire attention and devotional sentiments, failed on this evening to absorb the thoughts of Sabina. From his unquiet air and the restless movements of his eyes in the direction of the loft occupied by the organ and choir, it was evident that place had to him some unusual attraction. No one would accuse him of any partiality to any fair one to be found up there, or indeed elsewhere. His indifference to the sex was well known. But as he listened to the sweet, soul-subduing harmony which floated through the vast edifice, he seemed enraptured with every note, and almost neglected his duties during the opening service.

He sat evidently in deep meditation under the discourse from the Reverend Mr. Mellowtone, but gave no external sign of edification or even interest in the priest. It was only after the congregation was dismissed he exhibited any returning animation, in the eagerness with which he scanned in the vestibule each person descending from the gallery.

"I cannot tell who it is," said he to his venerable aunt, as she took his arm and gently pressed him forward to the pavement.

"What do you say, nephew?" asked the lady.

"I should like to know, aunt, who led in the choir this evening. Did you ever hear such a voice?"

"I thought the music very good, certainly; very good, as it ought to be. But perhaps it was Mr. Mellowtone you heard."



“Mr. Mellowtone!” exclaimed the nephew. “He might put one to sleep; but that voice which I heard this evening was something seldom equalled, and to me entirely new and surprising.”

“But, Nicolas, what did you think of the discourse?”

“The discourse, did you say, aunt? I never heard a word of it; I was thinking only of that voice.”

This reply was a gentle shock to the good lady, and she very prudently permitted the conversation to drop, as they walked along in silence absorbed in their respective meditations. At last they approached some friends who were also on their way home from church, and from them Sabina learned that the object of his admiration was young Mr. Trenk. With this information obtained, he became more attentive to his venerable relative as they drew near to her family mansion.

On entering the parlors Sabina discovered, in the partial light which a distant burner alone supplied, that young Mr. Waters and his beautiful young wife were there, waiting the return of their mother. “Tell me,” said he eagerly to her, “who is young Mr. Trenk?”

“A very rich, fascinating, dissipated young gentleman, Mr. Sabina, whom I am shocked at your inquiring for,” replied Mrs. Waters the younger, with a most winning smile.

“I don’t care about his dissipation, but do you know him?”

“Certainly I know him; but as you seem excited, and may possibly intend to send him your card, you cannot, surely, expect me to carry it.”

“I want to know him,” muttered Sabina. “What a magnificent voice he has!”

“When did you become a musical critic?” asked the lady, as she walked through the suite of parlors to the no less spa-



cious dining-room brilliantly lighted beyond. Her husband and Sabina followed, and as the lady helped herself to some fruit and an ice, Sabina still pursued the one thought predominant in his mind. Throwing himself into a large cushioned arm-chair near the table, he seemed perplexed at the vague answers which he supposed were made equivocal only to provoke him. He knew he was no great favorite of his cousin's pretty wife, who had been, before her marriage, a celebrated belle, and no less witty than beautiful, while some said her good common sense was equal to her other recommendations. But he still was on the best of terms with her, and again renewed the topic.

"It does not seem altogether fair, my dear cousin, that you should be so tantalizing in your answers about this Mr. Trenk."

"Well, my dear Mr. Sabina," with emphasis on the adjective, "I am sure I am willing to tell you all I know, but in your eagerness you have forgotten to inform me why you inquire; and I cannot, therefore, imagine what you want to know about him."

Hereupon he described the excellence of his music in church, and the effect it had upon him. In the great admiration for his skill, he had expressed a very natural desire to know something of the performer.

"With this explanation," said she, "I now understand you. Well, then, to begin at the beginning: Once upon a time, about two or three years ago, Mr. Trenk made his appearance in society, introduced, I believe, by Walter Parker, who never stood sponsor before nor since for the gentility of anybody. Indeed, I have heard him deny the introduction, declaring the young ladies forced him to present them to him; that they fairly besieged his mother about



it, and he had either to introduce them or to call in the police to keep them quiet."

"That exonerates Walter Parker," said Mr. Waters, the husband.

The wife smiled as she proceeded. "At all events, Mr. Parker knew all about him, although he denied that also. But when pressed as to his family, he confessed it was old as the Highlands, and thought if any young lady should be fool enough to marry him, she would never have cause to be annoyed with his relations. As to his wealth, Walter said it might be immense, fabulous; but it was difficult now-a-days to say who was rich. Mr. Parker is, you know, an enigma himself, and it is impossible to tell when he is serious or when in jest."

"Yet this does not," said Sabina, "enlighten me much."

"Well, then," added the lady, "everybody thinks him a very quiet, wealthy, accomplished, fascinating, dissipated young gentleman, and handsome as he is wicked. He won a yacht in a raffle at Newport."

"How attractive he must be to mothers with marriageable daughters," added Sabina, with mock gravity.

The lady slightly, by a look, resented this remark, as she replied: "I wonder one so sober and so good as Mr. Sabina should desire to know one so worldly?"

"I don't think he would bite me, cousin."

"Bite you!" exclaimed the beautiful wife, with a satirical smile. "Bite you! What a blessing would come from the infection—grace, wit, good manners, melody, accomplishments;" and then suddenly checked herself as if having said something improper.

"It takes these dissipated, depraved wretches, all their



spare time to cultivate accomplishment and pay attention to the ladies, to maintain their footing in society."

"What a novel view of social enjoyment," replied she, somewhat piqued. "These horrible, sinful creatures, these young men, enter society as a penance; they rush frantically from their mental sufferings to waltz them away in expiation with some young lady; they appease the stings of remorse with the self-inflicted tortures of a quadrille; find absolution for a guilty conscience in a flirtation; and fly off like vampires before the dawn to some garret. I now understand, with your innocent life, why it is that we have to drag you with us into company, and push you up forcibly to a partner in a cotillion."

"You cannot say, madam," answered Sabina, "that I ever went with you reluctantly to a ball, or supper, or concert, or reception, or opera, or even to the milliner's, when your husband was engaged down town with business, examining accounts, committee on a bank statement, director in a fire company, or some other of those thousand and one excuses which married gentlemen have for staying away at night."

"I will admit you have been very obliging."

"Well, then," said Sabina, not heeding her remark, "when other dodges fail, these young married men join the Life Guard and have to go every night to drill, to drill; and that is the reason why they march with eyes right and bayonets on a line up Broadway. They know their wives are reviewing them."

Young Waters laughed aloud at this unexpected attack, and Sabina continued, addressing the pretty lady: "Yes! I go with you cheerfully, and with aunt, also, to Sunday-schools, Bible class, evening lectures, to morning service, to Dorcas societies, and a dozen other religious gatherings."



“And which class of duties do you prefer?” inquired the lady, with a smile.

“I don’t know that I have any preference. They are very much alike—very dull and trying to the patience.”

“What a waste of the virtues, Mr. Sabina.”

“Yes,” he answered, “it is a waste when a lady desires your escort to a party; ‘and be sure,’ she tells you, to call early for her. But when you call early, she keeps you waiting an hour or two, at least, in a parlor, neither light nor dark, neither warm nor cold.” Here he pantomimed a gentleman trying to amuse himself under such cheering circumstances. “Then you drive off at last, to be kept another hour, while she is in the dressing-room, watching for her exit, to conduct her further on.” This scene he embellished with another ludicrous imitation. “In the supper-room she gives you her gloves to hold, and her fan, and her handkerchief, and her bouquet, while she takes some pickled oysters, and some stewed oysters, and some fried oysters”—imitating a delicate lady pursuing a voracious appetite under fashionable difficulties—“and some chicken salad, and some more champagne, and some terrapin, and jelly, and strawberry cream, a little more of the strawberry, and just a drop of Amontillado;” embellishing each and every article with some suitable striking caricature of voice and acting, to end with a prolonged imitation of opening a bottle and pouring out wine. “If a fellow wants anything himself he must ask a neighbor to feed him with a knife, the forks being all engaged and his hands full.” This part of the performance was represented under some choice exhibitions of dogs snarling over a bone. “Now, I should like to know where is the fun in all this? Oh! to be sure, there is the music, the *prima-donna* with voice cleared by a heavy



supper and dense atmosphere of heated and crowded rooms." This he embellished with the parlor theatricals, "imploring" a reluctant young lady to sing, twisting an imaginary music-stool three times one way and fourteen times another. The concluding piece was a burlesque duett, in which he ventriloquized two rats quarrelling under the carpet to the notes of the Anvil Chorus, while he was keeping time on the table at an imaginary piano. The applause from his audience brought even the servants to cluster in the hall, out of sight, in unbounded admiration.

"But this is not all," he continued; "you must go home, if you can ever get there. Now's your turn to wait down stairs till the lady puts on her wrappings." At this he slouched on his hat, turned up his coat collar, folded a shawl round his throat to represent the tired gentleman, the tipsy beau, the young lover with faded smile, the savage brother gritting his teeth, or the sleepy one; the agreeable friend with his stock in trade of witty things exhausted, and the patient, good soul in tight boots, with faint success at a smile under the patent-leather torture of a corn.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

ON the following morning Sabina set forth from his rooms about noon to learn further of Nathan Trenk, and, if possible, to make his acquaintance. That he should not have encountered him heretofore was in consequence of Sabina's absence in the South during the last few winters, at the season when the city is the most hospitable and when such young men are constantly in society.



"I shall, first of all," said Sabina to himself as he drew on his kid gloves, "find something at the Foundlings, where some one will be sure to know all about the chap." With this he bent his steps towards Broadway, although it is well known such a charitable foundation is not to be discovered in that direction. "Yes, some one will tell me," he muttered, "among that learned society of useful information, where Trenk is to be seen."

He had not quite reached that street when he stopped for a moment before a row of unassuming three-story brick buildings, and then entered the door of a little dirty looking cigar and tobacco shop in one of them. A plainly-dressed German girl rose to receive him as he stepped to the counter. "What's in my box?" said he.

The girl, immediately looking behind a screen, drew forth some letters and newspapers, which she handed in silence to him.

"Nobody to see me?" he inquired.

"No one," she answered, respectfully.

"That's good, anyhow," he remarked, and turning away, pushed open an inner door that led into a narrow passage, coming to the end of which, he touched a spring in the wall and another door flew open. He now found himself in a spacious refectory and drinking saloon, fitted up with all the appliances of taste, beauty, and comfort, to be seen in the most luxurious establishments of the kind. The floor was of white marble tile, and the slabs of the tables were of the same material. A magnificent chandelier hung from the frescoed ceiling in harmony with the line engravings and costly pictures adorning the walls. The boxes or stalls for the accommodation of guests were draped with heavy silk damask curtains, hung on massive frames of thick gilding,



and at the entrance of each a bronze statue of a man-at-arms, in chain-armor, stood holding a torch in hand. Some of the large alcoves were in the form of tents, with thick silken cords and tassels pendent from the sides; and paintings of martial and musical instruments were clustered in rich profusion within the imaginary encampment.

A solitary attendant was in waiting in this festive apartment, to whom Sabina did not deign to speak; but passing through, he ascended a staircase beyond that led to the story above. Opening a door, he entered a cheerful, cool apartment, with the windows looking to the south, through which a refreshing breeze was blowing from the Bay. At the upper end of this room a young gentleman was seated in a luxurious arm-chair, with his feet on a low floor cushion. At his elbow a small movable stand was placed, on which rested a glass of brandy. The young gentleman, although not twenty-five years of age, must have weighed more than two hundred pounds. He was of good height, with light hair, light eyebrows, blue eyes, and a heavy beard almost white. He was smoking a large, highly-ornamented German pipe, imparting to his whole appearance that of a good-natured, ponderous, Teutonic boy, Bacchus, as painted by some Rhenish artist. When the door opened he unclosed his half-shut eyes, but without raising his head, while his chin almost rested on his breast, as he shot a glance through his upper eyelashes at the intruder. Sabina approached without receiving any other recognition than a steady gaze from the fleshy occupant on the chair, and asked:

“Is nobody here?”

“Echo answers I am,” growled the white beard, sucking away at his pipe without raising his head.

“So I see,” said Sabina. “But you are not a room-full.”



"Almost," came from him of the German pipe.

"It is rather warm, this morning."

"Slightually," was the slow, laconic answer.

"Suppose you lay down that pipe and listen to me, Mr. Burk."

"Do you want me to take to drinking?" said the fat youth, with his chubby fingers seizing the glass of brandy.

"Not on my account."

"Look here, Don," said Burk, coughing, for he had swallowed some smoke, and at the same time pressing the tobacco in the bowl of the pipe; "look here, Don; do you know the taste of brandy? Had you ever the immoral courage to try it?"

"Yes I have, often; but I don't like it."

"Do you carry, Don, the dry temperance dictionary that explurges all words of liquid syllables? If not, what will you take? Let me order something strong, not rash; a rash that may come out on your face. What do you say to a glass of ice-water with a teaspoon of claret? I can make for you a milk punch, three spoons of cream, and some sugar. As you smoke, here's a straw; try that with a lucifer match."

"Thank you, Mr. Burk; I will take nothing."

"Then if you have come for my agreeable society, take a seat and propel," said the young gentleman, putting his mouth down to the table to sip his brandy.

"Tell me where is everybody this morning?" inquired Sabina.

"You see, Don, these banquet halls deserted. This is a bad hour to meet the innocents. I suppose they are now out to be washed by their mothers. They come here early to get their morning's milk on their way down town; they



return to this peaceful hamlet going up, for a dew-drop to keep them lively in the evening, and sometimes they lay their sweet curly heads here at night."

"I have often seen plenty of them at this time of day."

"Maybe you have, Don Nicolas. But they are now all gone—the brightest, loveliest, dearest, are always first to go; some have taken to yachts, the heaving might and main in the nasty deep; some to excoriations on horseback; some to sea-bathing in the suburbs of the city, teaching young ladies in their innocence and India-rubbers how to swim, along with some other knowledge not put down as an item in school bills. But it is a blessing, Señor Don, that I am here for your comfort. You now have discovered that foundlings are not always to be found." Hereupon he offered up a libation to his thirsty lips.

"Do you know young Trenk?" asked Sabina, abruptly.

"Moderately, Señor Hidalgo; moderately," setting down the glass of brandy.

"Where can I find him, do you suppose?"

"Mr. Trenk, in my humble opinion, Don Señor, does not publish where he 'is to be found at all hours;' as they say in astrological advertisements. His star is not in the ascendant at noon, but under a slight occultation."

"Where, then, can I meet him in the evening?"

"Lacing a ballet-dancer's gaiter, if he has no higher aspiration, or cooking garlic and onions with Parmesan cheese, for his favorite prima-donna, whoever she may be."

"Is he a foundling?"

"Not as I know of this establishment. But on that point you had better consult the diminutive Dutch damsel down stairs who rejoices in the romantic name, which for short is Miss Theodolinda Wolfenkrauthausen.



"True enough," said Sabina, "she knows every one."

"But I am afraid, very much afraid," groaned the fat youth, clasping his hands together, rolling up the white of his eyes, and drawing down the corners of his mouth, "I am grievously afraid, brother Nicolas, that young Trenk is no better than one of the wicked. Avoid him as a limb of Satan, as a whole tree of evil, as an immense forest of depravity, as a world of season-tickets for the pit of perdition. You would not live in thy comeliness and grace to die in the odor of brandy." Here again the youth groaned in spirit, and then hastily finished his glass.

Sabina moved not a muscle at the mock exhortation. He appeared indifferent to it, unless it might be a slight twinkle of an eye at the burlesque solemnity of the advice.

"Think, brother Nicolas," he continued, in the same strain, "how thy white choker might be soiled, thy spotless linen-cambric rumpled, thy smooth black hair wrinkled, if this man of strategy would seize thee forcibly and hurry thee headlong into cutting a pirouette with sylphides, straining thy delicate voice after some singing syren, and drawing thy checks for thousands lost at poker! Ah, thee knowest not the fascinations of a good hand at poker! I have been tempted on a good hand, too, and lost. For that loss I grieve, and now I see the error of my play. But go, my son, and ask Miss Nix-cumer-aus."

Sabina hastened down to inquire of Theodolinda if Mr. Trenk were free of this honorable company; and learning from her that he was not, he rushed back to Burk and begged he would give him an introduction to the young man; which, being promised, Sabina ordered another brandy-smash for his companion and a mint-julep for himself.

"I object not, Don Nicolas, to the use of mint; but as it is



not mentioned along with frankincense and myrrh, aloes and cinnamon, I avoid it, save only as a gentle sauce to a bit of the innocent lamb."

"All who quote Scripture are not saints," Sabina replied.

"True, very true," Burk answered, moralizing. "It is astonishing how learned we become in the Gospels whenever we want to perpetrate some rascality wholesale. We can break the ten commandments or our neighbor's head, and quote somebody among the prophets in our favor."

Sabina looked up to see if Burk were still jesting. But he had raised a dense cloud, so that his features were not visible.

"Now there," continued Burk, "there is Trenk, of whom one would suppose butter would not melt in his mouth; he looks innocent, goes to church regularly, is well behaved at all times, is such a favorite with mammas and the young ladies, but withal is deep, a desperately dissipated young scamp, and sings beautifully, beautifully."

"Does he sing so very well?"

"Like a martingale. But then he is rich, and that accounts for his early ruin."

"He must be a hopeful youth."

"He is the best of fellows," said Burk, pulling the pipe out of his mouth. "It almost makes me shed tears to think of him. I love him like a young brother. I could take him in my arms and fold him to my heart, he is so delightful when singing some of his pretty little songs."

It was very evident that if Nathan had acquired the reputation of wealth and family, he had also received an additional notoriety not quite so enviable. He did not belong to this Club, called the Foundlings; for, in truth, he knew nothing of it, in common with all others who were



not members. The establishment had its rise in a few wealthy young men who were, indeed, too young to gain admittance into other clubs, or where their wishes would not have been gratified. They were without a place of common resort, and were known as the "Children in the Wood;" the babes of "the Old Woman who lived in a Shoe;" and, finally, as "the Lost Infants." An enterprising French cook, a superior artist but without funds, proposed to furnish them a place of entertainment. His scheme was brilliant, and they embraced it without calculating the chances of failure. The Frenchman was furnished profusely with money, and having more professional ambition than avarice, dealt honorably by "the babes." Afraid at first of being laughed at for their undertaking, they resolved to keep the matter profoundly secret except to the members admitted. In a short time the convenience of silence and exclusiveness became so apparent that it was adopted as a cardinal rule, to which all the initiated were sworn, not to allude in any manner to the Club, nor even hint at its existence. The French cook sent for his brother, who was a commissionnaire on the streets of Paris, and taking him into business, he was enabled to serve the Foundlings to a much greater extent, and in a greater variety of ways, than are known in the management of other clubs. Had Sabina desired this Frenchman, Monsieur Leté, to let him know all about young Trenk, it is very probable in two or three days he would have been informed of his whole history, his present habits, position, and pursuits. The brother commissionnaire had the means whereby he could have soon found out all. It was his trade; for many little dishes of gossip and scandal did he dress up artistically for the gratification of the Foundlings. None of the



French secret police were more successful in arriving at the truth.

As Sabina and Burk sat drinking, perhaps in the city no two young men were more dissimilar in their habits, tastes, opinions, and pursuits, if either of them could be said to have any aim in life. Both were rich, and therefore had been invited to become members of the Club by friends. But in all else they differed. Mr. Burk was of one of the very oldest and most distinguished families in the State of New York; but the wealth of the family had settled in another branch, and Burk had commenced the study of medicine, which he intended following as a profession. But in consequence of a cousin dying unexpectedly, he had fallen heir, not to a fortune, but to the anticipation of a very large one. An aged lady relative, who was the head of the family, and who possessed the revenues also, declared upon the death of the cousin that Burk was the lineal heir entitled to the fortune at her decease. In truth this old dame, somewhat verging on eighty, but looking not quite so old, had far outlived all her own generation, and had no near relatives now living among persons even of her own blood and name. But as she had announced that Burk was to be her heir, and as no one doubted, with her family pride, that she would keep her word, the world gave him the credit of possessing the wealth which was only in expectancy. In the meantime she agreed to allow him an annual amount for his expenses, ample, as she thought, for the most lavish expenditures of a young man; and so it would have been at the beginning of this century, to which date she commonly referred when forming her estimate of any matter, but which amount Burk found not quite enough for some of the expensive dissipation in which he indulged.



The old lady, not deeming it proper that her heir should become a doctor, as in her opinion it was not the profession of a gentleman, Burk very willingly quitted his medical studies, and as yet had not turned his attention to any other. His parents being dead, he very readily agreed, on the old lady's order, to live with her in the venerable family mansion. She was very exacting in his observance of some pieces of etiquette and certain little attentions; but beyond these, his time was at his own disposal. Her establishment was on a very liberal scale, and some thirty years ago, perhaps, would have been called princely. But now the house was antiquated, and the rich furniture also. But this was no objection to the plate, which was in profusion, nor to the contents of a well stocked wine-cellar.

Burk spent his time in a pleasant manner at the Club, the theatres, or other places of public amusement; and as he was a great favorite in society, as well as possessing a fine basso voice, he could often be seen at some evening reunion or supper party. Being very amiable, with an inexhaustible fund of good spirits, his life seemed devoted to amusement; and as his "too solid flesh" or indolent temperament forbade active sports, he was content to enjoy whatever he could find without much physical exertion. His fondness for brandy and his pipe had long since become proverbial; nor did he care how many pleasant allusions were made by his friends to these habits.

The conversation was resumed by Sabina. "You are greatly attached, Mr. Burk, to young Trenk."

"Yes, you may well say that," he answered, as Sabina discovered an unknown gentleman to enter through a side door, stepping up cautiously behind Burk's chair to surprise him, and at the same time smiling to Sabina to give no sig-



nal. "Yes, indeed," continued Burk, "I do like the fellow. I would have gathered him as a hen gathers her young under her wings, but somehow he is shy."

"That shows his sense," said the intruder, who was Walter Parker, putting both of his hands over Burk's eyes. "Guess who I am, you old reprobate? Gathering chickens under your wing! You had better put on feather pantaloons and hatch out a basket of eggs."

"Let go, let go," cried Burk, taking the pipe out of his mouth.

"First guess who I am."

"Well, let me see who you are," said the fat youth, making no further resistance. Then he added slowly: "The fingers are sticky. It must be the journeyman tailor at Lispenard. No. Vinegar and pepper! it is the boy that opens oysters at Canal street. No. A smell of ink and foolscap—clerk to the bowling alley at the Shades. Marker for the Olympic billiard table. Not right yet?" Hereupon he gave a long whistle and exclaimed: "Now I have it! A learned Theban; some crazy robed man of justice; some fool of a yoke-fellow of equity; some villain of a Revised Statute referee. 'Tis one of the three—mad, fool, or knave; the last created by special statute in the present century."

Walter released his hands and stepped in front of his colossal friend.

"Come, tell me, Mr. Burk, why quoting Scripture to-day?"

"Not Scripture, Walter, not Scripture; it was Shakespeare—Lear, King Lear, who gave away his property and then went to law about it; law being insanity, and equity nonsense. If he had known anything of a referee he would have pictured that as rascality. He had a fine time of it, generally. He caught thunder, as you may well expect; fell into low



company and strange bed-fellows—politicians, members of Congress, editors of religious newspapers, railroad directors, and literary ladies; took to chewing tobacco, and was nominated for President. His name is now on the slate for that office, with only twelve hundred and fifty candidates ahead of him. When the mad king was about dying, one of the girls came back and raised a jolly row, so as to have it reported that the elegant, fashionable, beautiful, and so forth, had just arrived from Paris, to throw herself into the outstretched arms of her long-lost, expiring father. All true, all true,” added Burk, resuming his pipe.

“She had an editorial obituary inserted in the morning papers, in which it was stated the extent and variety of her wardrobe, and especially a description and the number of her new imported dresses, now in the bonded warehouse awaiting the sale of her Southern plantation and thousand slaves for funds to pay the duties. Walter, my dear boy, bless your innocence, all the ‘fashionable’ intelligence and ‘movements in high life’ which you read of in newspaper corners are puffs penned and paid for by Gonerils. But I beg your pardon, Mr. Sabina,” turning to him, and in a courteous, respectful manner adding: “Permit me to introduce you to my friend Mr. Parker. I had forgotten you were not acquainted.”

The gentlemen bowed to each other, and Burk finished his glass of brandy. After a moment’s pause, Sabina looked at his watch, and addressing Walter, remarked: “I have ordered a few special articles for lunch to-day, and I shall take it as a favor if you will both join me in the saloon.”

“This is what Walter would call a special retainer,” said Burk, “and as I am not aware of its being in violation of



the rules of the Club, I am most happy to accept your invitation."

In descending the staircase after Sabina, Burk found an opportunity to whisper Walter: "He is stingy, a spoony, awfully given to Bible societies, tea-parties, and that sort of thing; rich as a plum-pudding, and no friends; a Miss Nancy of a fellow."

The lunch which was ordered, however, did not confirm this opinion, for it was of some very choice, expensive dishes, and wines with brands of the first quality.

"You have not informed us, Walter," said Burk, pouring out some sparkling hock, "you have not informed us to what circumstance we are indebted for your visit to the Club at this hour in the day?"

"That is true. You remind me that I came up to invite verbally and especially a few of my friends to a small gathering at our house to-morrow evening, where we expect to see you."

"I am much obliged to you, Walter; but what was the especial necessity for the trouble about me? A note intrusted to that damsel, Theodolinda, would have been sufficient."

"I hope you will bring your friend Mr. Sabina with you. It would be an additional pleasure."

Sabina bowed his thanks for the compliment, as Burk exclaimed, laying down his fork:

"That will suit Don Nicolas admirably. Trenk will be sure to be there."

"I may say we expect the gentleman's presence, if that is any inducement to Mr. Sabina."

"We were talking about the Orpheiferous individual before you came in, Walter, and the Don desired to become acquainted with him."



“If you are fond of music, Mr. Sabina, you will have no cause to regret an introduction.”

“I was struck with his talent last evening at our church, and should be much pleased to hear him again.”

The gentlemen hereupon separated, as Walter had to see some more of the “babes,” who were now crowding the saloon.

---

## CHAPTER X.

MRS. VANDORP, the lady mentioned in the last chapter as the aged relative of young Burk, although long past her prime of life, and not possessing any personal attractions, must in her youth have been blessed with more than a common share of beauty. An antique portrait which still graced one of the parlors, represented her as a young lady of commanding figure, rosy complexion, a prominent nose, with piercing, dark, almond-shaped eyes, and a delicately formed mouth, in which determination and high spirit were strongly marked. A tradition prevailed in the collateral branches of the family that her happiness was destroyed in early life by an unfortunate love affair. A few facts, however, only were known, and those so imperfectly that many supposed all to be fable. The old family servants would not speak upon the subject, and whatever they knew or had learned by tale or history remained undivulged.

Born in the last century, and educated in the aristocratic principles of that period, she imbibed all the prejudices of the circle in which she moved. A belle, a beauty, an heiress of an old family, she was caressed by the distinguished men



of her time, and courted by several whose names have since become historical. But it is said she slighted them all for a fashionable young gentleman, educated in Paris, who returned when the Jacobins obtained the upper hand in France. This young man was said to have been her cousin, of an aristocratic family, but whose father had somewhat damaged his standing by entering into commercial pursuits, in which he was successful, and in which his son was, or was to be, his successor. The elegance of manners and the accomplishments of the young merchant, along with his great personal attractions, had induced the then Fanny Ormond to smile upon him. But it was long, imbued as she was in her high caste, before she could bring her mind to tolerate him as a suitor. No objections arose in any quarter to her choice, as the lover moved in the same society with her, and was generally supposed to be as wealthy, although she considered it some slight sacrifice of position in accepting him. But as the prejudices of that age are now forgotten or unknown, it would be idle to speculate upon them.

Some time after it was announced the engagement was broken, accompanied with a vague rumor that the lover had put an end to it. Why or wherefore was never known. It was never explained even to Fanny herself. After this event, his father suffered by the French seizures of American vessels, and the young man went back to Paris to obtain some indemnity from the First Consul for the spoliation, which was the last known to this imperfect tradition of his history. What the young lady thought of this conduct, or how much she suffered, was not learned by those around her. She mingled in society as before, and was even more expensive and elegant in her toilette. Still her deportment underwent a change. She was not so joyous or enthusiastic in



her feelings, nor so affable to her admirers in general. Yet for a while she courted popularity, and was far more lavish in her expenditures. Gradually, however, she withdrew in a great measure from the gay world, and finally her friends heard without astonishment that she was affianced to an old gentleman, formerly a gallant officer in the war. The old hero, Vandorp, must have been ardent in his love, for, in defiance of all hereditary pride, he broke the entails on his landed estates, and settled all upon his young wife, reserving the revenues only to himself during his lifetime.

The lady desired her husband to move to a country seat on the Hudson, as she wished seclusion. But the old soldier, not reconciled to quit the festive bottle and boon companions with whom he fought over his battles, objected; and therefore, as a compromise, at last consented that his wife should choose a new residence not farther than two miles from the Tontine Hotel, in Water street, anywhere on the island, which would surely be far enough from the city. With this understanding she selected beyond the King's Farm a field of twenty acres that belonged to her, for a future residence, and built the mansion to which allusion has been made above. No expense was spared in making the house imposing, magnificent, and comfortable, according to the taste of those times. Hewn stone, elaborate marbles, carving in wood, oak wainscots and cornices, and thick, massive balustrades of walnut, with solid mahogany doors and frames, still attest the labor bestowed upon it, while every article of furniture, either useful or ornamental, was imported. At the present day it rears its antique walls and steep roofs, a quaint relic of the past, recalling the architecture of that period in a former century, when a learned High Dutch geographer described the city of Albany, or rather its people, as plea-



santly situated near the river, "containing two hundred houses and a thousand inhabitants, with all their gable-ends to the street."

In that spacious mansion the proud lady lived, dispensing her sumptuous hospitality. Here were two children born unto her, but dying in their infancy; and here was the veteran Vandorp gathered to his fathers, to be entombed with military honors at the Trinity burial-ground.

After the death of her husband the widow's establishment underwent a reform in the household, and some of the old servants whom Vandorp knew in his campaigns, or their children, for whom he had a partiality and consequently employed by him, were dismissed by the imperious matron as too dissipated or disrespectful in their manners. These discarded servants, bearing no good-will to her, were wont to tell of some singular habits in their late mistress; of shutting herself up for days in a private apartment, secluded from all save a confidential dame long in the family, where moans and shrieks were overheard, when no doubt some former trouble came back to torment this proud, unfeeling woman. On one occasion the footman called in, found her on the floor in convulsions, with an old letter lying at her side. He did not read it all, but something was in that letter about a young man loving her more than all else on earth; that he could love no other in this world; but to forget him, or forgive him, or hate him, or something, to save him from the remorse which must otherwise embitter his life. Some said her fits came on through hate, deadly hate to that young man; others said she still loved him; but all agreed it was the one or the other feeling.

Many years thereafter it was known an event had occurred deeply affecting her, at which time her physician re-



ported she had broken a blood-vessel. This crisis passed away, and a period of partial tranquillity followed, in which her attacks were neither frequent nor violent. But again, when least expected, after an interval of three or four years, the flood-gates of her memory were opened anew, and love hate, revenge, and remorse burst forth in torrents of passion. Her medical attendant, something of a male gossip, spoke of her case as singular, and mentioned some of her symptoms. But even this event was so long ago, that mothers told their marriageable daughters of it as an occurrence happening when they first went into company.

Instead of withdrawing from society as she grew older, the venerable widow seemed each year to enlarge the circle of her acquaintance, and was seen more frequently in public. Perhaps her physicians advised this; perhaps she found in it a relief. But many ascribed it to a more benevolent motive. They said, as the city increased, her premises were encroached upon by persons building in the vicinity, and that many of these new neighbors were descendants of youthful associates; and that if she now kept up a recognition of all the families whom she had once known, her visiting-list would embrace thousands. A young mother, whose husband was struggling into position, was often surprised to learn from her little children on their return from a walk, that the old lady in the "queer stone house" had stopped the nurse, and called them in to inquire their names and kiss them, saying she had known their great-grandmamma, or some other long forgotten ancestor; and after showing them the pictures, she had given them cherries, and let them pick their little baskets full of strawberries, roses, and honeysuckles. Others, again, without any pretension to fashionable life, were waited on by her, and invited to call, on the strength of



her knowing some aged relatives, many years in their graves.

But in all these attentions the pride of family was the ruling motive. It was names, not wealth, by which she was guided in her choice of company; for she entirely ignored those new neighbors who had suddenly become rich, in precisely the same manner that they ignored those who were only in moderate circumstances, however respectable.

As the streets and stately houses began to surround her, the venerable antique mansion each day became more conspicuous from its incongruity to the neighboring architecture. It seemed that long rows of buildings were gradually marching by lines of streets and columns of avenues to attack her feudal castle; that an unceasing sap under the hill on which she resided was soon, by the aid of the long trains of earth-carts, to be successful; while the perpetual explosion of gunpowder in the adjoining stone quarries resembled the roar of siege guns.

But as they mined, she threw up trenches; with every blast in the quarries, she raised new stone parapets. Thus, her outer walls resembled bastions, with embrasures, and the grounds above were so many earthworks, escarpments, esplanades, fosses, and covered ways, with green sod and moss engineering; and a glacis rich in roses, and vines, and berries, and fruit, with trellises as blinds to conceal the movements of the besieged. Moreover, the children for many squares around would not go to sleep until told the legend about old Diedrich Vandorp, in a Continental uniform, marching at midnight round the premises, blowing a horn, and drinking out of a bottle, until, out of breath, his nose grew red with the morning sun, when he retired to Fort Washington to the soldiers' graveyard.



It must be confessed the old mansion and grounds began, by means of these external improvements, to present an imposing and cheerful aspect, not unlike the smiling countenance of a venerable grandmother whom a spoilt child compels to place on her white locks the saucy darling little straw bonnet, full of bright ribbons, artificial flowers, and fashionable trimmings. In truth, the embellishments were of such appropriate taste, that many strangers in passing wondered if the house and all were not of recent structure, designed by some rich proprietor to blend the modern ornamental with the solid antique, to exhibit wealth and skill in architecture at the same time.

No lady could be more hospitable, kind, and attentive to those once admitted to her threshold. To the young, her conversation was replete with amusing anecdotes of the past, and to others her historical reminiscences possessed not only absorbing interest, but also intrinsic value as mementoes of former times. In general company at other places she was much more reserved and silent, but still her deportment was pleasing, which made her presence acceptable to all, both young and old.

On stated evenings, when she threw open her doors for the reception of friends, the spacious rooms and corridors were crowded with the most respectable and distinguished of the city; for it was estimated as a mark of some importance to be seen in the brilliant throng whose position entitled them to her acquaintance. The entertainment dispensed to her guests on these occasions was marked with a profusion and variety of delicacies characteristic of the last century, but yet blended with the taste of this age, until one was at a loss in deciding whether most to admire the extended scale of the festivity, or the ease and elegance with which it was served.



That she should at times exclude herself from all society, even closing her hospitable doors to ordinary visitors, was well known. But these periods were noted, and much spoken of as peculiar, and for her sake much to be regretted. She sought sympathy from none; nor would she have encouraged the approaches of any desiring her confidence. Thus the Lady Dowager, as the young people playfully called her, was esteemed by them as a remarkable personage, and a very useful member of the fashionable world.

The duties she imposed upon her young kinsman, Burk, were neither onerous nor incessant. He was always to be seen with her on visits of ceremony, and at church, or at those evening parties she honored with her presence. When she extended invitations to dine, or when her doors were thrown open for her evening receptions, the young gentleman assisted in dispensing her hospitality. Beyond these services his time was at his own disposal.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

WHEN Burk left the Club late in the afternoon, the effects of different stimulants imbibed through the day had not passed off. He was in that happy, loquacious mood which is one of the mellow symptoms left of recent dissipation. A subsiding hiccough was in his throat and an oscillation in his movements. He had hardly stepped beyond the presence of Theodolinda and regained the street, when he was accosted by a slim, little, middle-aged man, dressed in a suit of new black broadcloth, exhibiting the utmost neatness and attention to his external appearance. He was smoothly



shaved, without whiskers or gloves ; and, altogether, resembled some thriving industrious tradesman.

“Mr. Burk,” said he, with great respect in his manner, “will you permit me to detain you for a moment?”

“Certainly,” said Burk, “certainly, Jimmy ; what’s up? Anything out to-day?”

“Not anything particular, thank you.”

“What’s the color in gloves, Mr. Dewlap, which you sport—white, straw, brown, or black? Is it a baby, ball, a bridal, or burial festivity?”

“Well, I rather think it is dancing, sir.”

“Jimmy, you’re a Christian ; you weep with those who rejoice, and take champagne with people in tears, or words to that effect.”

“Yes, sir,” said Dewlap, “I make myself useful to my customers.”

“Useful, did you say, in your modesty? You are ornamental, sublime, voluptuous!”

“Mr. Burk, can you tell me where I will find Mr. Trenk, the young gentleman who is an acquaintance of yours?” asked he, desirous to come to business at once.

“Trenk, did you say? And find him at this hour?”

“Yes, sir ; you would oblige me by letting me know.”

“Trenk in daylight, Jimmy! Why, you might as well look for stars or fire-flies. Trenk and sunshine ; that’s good, anyhow ; that’s a joke,” and he shook his fat sides in silent maudlin laughter.

“I wish to know where his rooms are?”

“Look in the ailantus trees, Jimmy ; but no, their leaves are falling, and the lindens are fading. Well, try the conservatories ; you may dig him out of a japonica or cape-jasmine.”



"I have a little note for him," Dewlap explained, still intent on the main subject.

"Is it a note masculine or crinoline, that's the question?"

"It is an invitation from a lady."

"Whether it is nobler in the mind," continued Burk, "to let the gin-slugs and sherry-cobblers slide, or take arms against a sea of such good luck, is the rub, must give us pause, a pair of paws. But, Jimmy, why did not the fair one tell you his address?"

"I think she don't know him."

"Well, that's a lady of enterprise, of great pith and moment. But never mind, Jimmy, I will do as well; only lead me to her bower."

"I could easily get you an invitation, too."

"Oh, the feminine Mormon!"

"But it's a dancing party, Mr. Burk."

"A dancing party, a ball!" exclaimed the young gentleman. "A ball is very improper when, like oysters, out of season. Bal-masqué, or bal-moral, which is it, Jimmy? The one with only the face covered, the other with a virtuous petticoat to the ankle; I am for the 'moral' stripe, the moral suasion, which leaves the pleasures of the imagination to the spectator. A fancy ball, you know, is brought out to conundrum how the ladies would look with clothes on. No, no! Mr. Dewlap; my name is Joseph; too early in the season; too early at present for that, Jimmy. But give my compliments, the adoration of one who loves too wisely to love well, and beseech the nymph that in her liaisons be all my sins remembered."

"She's a married lady," interposed Dewlap.

"Married, is she? That is a superfluous surplusage, if not afraid to show her baptismal Anno Domini. Is she passional



or only sensuous? Is she a subjective pitch-into-a-fellow sort of go-ahead; or a quiet objective, always in the negative, until touched up in the tender strain, with the fingers on the high notes. Does she cultivate moonlight æsthetic love, or take it in the meridian free lunch style, with payment for the spiritual trimmings?"

"I don't understand you, Mr. Burk."

"Then, Jimmy, you are ignorant of the Angular Saxon dialect, which smoothes the corners of improper words, so as to say anything without a blush."

"But she is very respectable, rich, and well-married."

"All birds of a feather; some with nests, some only waiting to feather their nests, with the most sea-duck-tive currant jelly persuasion; never satisfied with the same feeding-ground, and half the time on the wing; the married women the worst. Jimmy, I cannot respond; too early in the season to open either oysters or a course of lectures on hornithology." Whereupon he bowed politely to Dewlap and walked on, leaving that distinguished character at a loss for important information.

As the young gentleman pursued his way with muddled wits, he could not refrain from reflecting on the strange coincidence of two persons within a few hours desiring to know the address of young Trenk. "One," muttered he to himself, "like a bull-dog, wants to take him by the throat to make him sing Ethiopian songs sweeter than Arabian gums. The other—let me see, who was the other—Ophelia Dewlap, seizes him by the heel, gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman; touches him on the tendo Achillis where so many men are vulnerable. A good dodge, that. If Trenk were green it would take. Then his white, downy mustache looks so much like fresh Durham cream that these little kittens



come to taste it and get a scratch or two." With such sage reflections the fat young gentleman pursued his walk.

Mr. Dewlap stood on the pavement for a moment quite undecided as to his future movements. Mr. Dewlap had his hat full of invitations of all kinds, but those intended for this dancing party were the most pressing. He was particularly requested to see Mr. Trenk, to prevail on him to come; while the other cards were for such young gentlemen as he might think proper to honor. He must now defer his search after Trenk, to decide upon the list he would make of the other availables. Some of these young gentlemen were, in his discriminating mind, a "touch above" the quality of the lady, and some others were a "touch below" the right social altitude. But it did not require much reflection, as he walked up the street to Broadway, for this able diplomatist to arrange the names and to make the proper selection.

It was a slight mistake on the part of the sagacious Dewlap in supposing the lady was not personally known to Mr. Trenk. She had waltzed with him on several evenings only a short time before at Saratoga, and was desirous to renew acquaintance on her return to the city. She was a young married lady, quite ambitious of distinction, or at least of attention in fashionable life, and determined in the ensuing season to enjoy it. With this intent, Mrs. Laura had commenced her campaign while her rivals were yet in summer cantonments in the country. Many strategical points could thus be obtained in taking the field early. She could secure the attendance of various gentlemen who would have too much on their hands in the winter; and she flattered herself that, once under her pictures and superb frescoes, she could make her house sufficiently agreeable for them to attend her bidding, more especially attend to her when she



was abroad. Graceful in the ball-room, she wished a partner who could assist in setting off her attractions; therefore she had been struck with Trenk's accomplishments in waltzing, and no less delighted to find, after being accidentally introduced to him for a partner, that he was of a very exclusive set at the springs, and reputed to be of great wealth.

Mrs. Laura was not of an old family, but of a very respectable position while a maiden without fortune. Well educated, accomplished, and pretty, she had married a gentleman without much cultivation of mind or manners, whose only recommendation to her was his independent income, made in a few years at the Corn Exchange. For the first two seasons after marriage, her efforts to establish herself in a good circle were not successful. She had failed, as many others fail, in consequence of believing a fine style of living and handsome entertainments would make her plenty of the right sort of friends. These afforded enough of visiting acquaintances, but she was conscious they were not the most congenial to be had, and resolved either to have agreeable society or have none at all. She had called into her service Jimmy Dewlap, to assist in her efforts. But Jimmy was not taken into her counsels to the extent he aspired, nor as far as he was in the cabinet of many more favorably situated. His counsel and advice were not graciously received, although gratuitously offered. It was his knowledge of the individual standing of ladies and gentlemen she wished to profit by; and no one in the city knew so well the relative position of everybody as that sleek little man.

Mr. Dewlap pursued his course and cogitations at the same time towards Broadway. On entering that crowded street he encountered a gentleman well known to him, yet whom he hesitated to accost, as it seemed, even to him, rather im-



pertinent to ask for instruction from such a source about the lodgings of a young gentleman. But at last his blushes yielded to business, as he touched his hat very obsequiously. The gracious gentleman returned the salutation, and Dewlap thus emboldened, came to a pause, as he said:

“Will Mr. Nevil permit me to inquire the address of young Mr. Trenk?”

Mr. Nevil slowly and doubtingly shook his head, as he answered: “You may obtain the information at the music store below Bleecker.”

“Thank you, sir,” said Dewlap, as he was about moving on, when Nevil further remarked: “I wish you would call on me at ten to-morrow, if convenient.”

“Certainly, with great pleasure,” said the complacent Dewlap, delighted with the prospect of some profitable job.

It was not long before he was possessed of the direction to Mr. Trenk’s lodgings, and was rapidly walking in a street leading to the east out of Broadway. He ascended the steps to the front door of a large brown-stone house and rang the bell, when he was instantly ushered into a sumptuous, spacious suite of parlors on the first floor, where he gave the servant his card for Mr. Trenk.

In a few moments the young gentleman entered, and rather surprised to find his visitor, without any ceremony, seated on one of the satin damask chairs. Dewlap hastened to regain his feet, and with his peculiar manner, handed him the note from the lady, at the same time remarking that an answer was requested. Nathan placed his elbow on the beautiful Italian carved marble mantel, and leisurely opening the envelope to withdraw the note, scanned its contents. “I shall attend to this, Mr. Dewlap,” said he, placing the billet in his pocket.



“Shall I tell the lady that she may expect you?”

“Did she require a verbal answer, sir?”

“By no manner of means; by no manner, Mr. Trenk. But you see, as I was uncertain, I thought”—here Jimmy fairly broke down and became silent, with his mouth open.

Trenk smiled as he remarked: “You know it is only ladies who intrust you with messages, and I cannot tell how far you are to be relied on by gentlemen in such important matters.”

This amiable speech entirely reassured the little man, who immediately found words to reply.

“Thank you, thank you. But if you should need my services, I am always on hand. Now you see,” said he, in a half-confidential whisper, “a good many little pleasant parties are soon coming off in the first families, rich, and all that sort of thing; pretty young ladies and fine suppers, and if you wish it, I can get you lots of cards without any trouble.”

“But I may not know the people.”

“That’s nothing, that’s nothing. They would all be glad to have you at their houses.”

“But who is to introduce me,” said Trenk, smiling, “when I know nothing about them, nor they know me?”

“The easiest thing in the world, sir; always some acquaintance going, who can make you known, and once introduced, there’s the end of it.”

“I think few gentlemen would be willing to be made acquainted on those terms.”

Mr. Dewlap smiled calmly at Trenk’s innocence of the ways of the world. “Here I have in my hat lining a good many cards of that sort for handsome young gentlemen, who are always glad to go when I arrange it for them. They are my sub-rosians, as I call them; and I assure you the



demands for such invitations are more numerous than I can supply."

Trenk mused over this piece of information in silence, until the persuasive Dewlap, mistaking the current of his thoughts, added: "I can let you pick three or four for yourself," at the same time exhibiting the contents of his hat.

"Not at present," said Trenk, hastily. "I am not in want of society for the present," bowing his visitor to the door.

Dewlap retired sadly discomfited. He had hoped to place Trenk on his free list of sub-rosians, thereby bringing additional honor to himself as a skilful diplomatist; for diplomacy is seldom without profit, which was always the leading motive with this little man.

Nathan Trenk waited until his visitor was ushered beyond the front door, when once more placing his elbow on the Italian marble, he carefully read over the invitation from Mrs. Laura. He was in doubt whether he should renew the acquaintance, as his visiting-list was now almost too extended. Throwing himself on one of the luxurious sofas, he gave way to profound meditation, where he need not be disturbed.

The house in which he was thus found so comfortable was one of much elegance and ornament united in the decoration and furniture. In this attractive mansion Mr. Trenk had his rooms, consisting of the entire range of the third story. His usual good fortune had thrown him into the possession of them; and his pretty face, with winning manners, had been the principal persuasives in his favor.

Mrs. Russell, a widow lady with two children, had been left by her husband's will in possession of this and other property during her life. Neither wishing to sell, nor in fact empowered to part with it, she had remained, but without



having any occupant for the third and fourth stories. Desirous to rent these to some gentleman who would be no trouble, and at the same time take off the gloom of so much space unoccupied, and perhaps afford society to her small family, she readily closed with the offer of Nathan, at a moderate rent, three years previous.

Having now found him at his lodgings, it may be as well to ascertain what he has been doing since his last appearance. Resolved to study law, he entered himself in the office of the distinguished counsellor, Mr. Mansfield. Next, he had examined the present state of his finances, to ascertain how he could most suitably accommodate himself in proportion to his funds. On leaving college, he had brought with him the enormous sum of thirteen hundred dollars, which his good cousin, Miss Howard, had been enabled to hoard for him. His wardrobe was complete, except those mutations which must always take place in strict conformity to the innovating fashions. Under the judicious advice of the same good cousin, he made an investment in a watch and other jewelry, which left him, when some more expenses were deducted, in possession of only nine hundred. He had learned that the annual subsidy of five hundred would still be lodged at a mercantile house for his support. With this scant supply he undertook his new life of study and society. With all the counsels of the good cousin still cherished, and the greatest economy on his part, soon came the knowledge that one thousand a year must be absorbed in his quiet mode of fashionable existence. Energetic and ambitious, he was early at his books in his own delightful apartments. By noon he had completed his allotted task of study for each day. In a short time after that hour he was seen in the law office of his preceptor, diligent in copying some legal docu-



ment or listening to whatever business was transpiring. Frequently he visited the courts; and again he undertook to become familiar in the practice, and by other means to perfect himself in his profession. His aim was to be hailed as a distinguished counsellor and advocate, for he aspired to become an orator. At sundown he returned to his rooms, where, after an hour's repose, he was ready for the pleasures of the evening.

He renewed his acquaintance with the lyric and other artists at the opera; and, in truth, became known to all those who wished for success before the footlights. His gentle, quiet manners, along with his accomplishments, rendered him a desirable acquaintance; nor was it many days before impresarios, managers, music-venders, and dramatic reporters for the public journals found him a useful ally. The just criticism he frankly pronounced at all times induced them to listen, the latter, especially, to borrow for their columns. He was so well known that he was versed in the history of each artist, thus making his information extensive and accurate about everything transpiring in the green room. Having admission behind the scenes, his face was familiar in those regions very wisely closed to the external world. One possessed of a tithe of his merits would soon have been made free at all times to the house, and thus without any solicitation, he was in possession of an unlimited supply of tickets. Sometimes it was known that, in rehearsal, he took part in order to accommodate the manager or artist, in case of accident, and when the orchestra required training. But this was seldom, and only in the evening. Nathan was conscious of the embarrassment which must ultimately ensue to him from his expenses exceeding his income; but, with a provident reflection, he found that he might turn his musical



knowledge to some profit. He soon came to an understanding with the dramatic reporters for his unwritten services to them, and in some publishing speculations he was handsomely remunerated from the music stores.

He had also a reward from a quarter the least expected. Soon after becoming a tenant of Mrs. Russell, he perceived the strong passion for music of her little daughter, an interesting cripple of fourteen years. Occasionally he was in time to escort the helpless child to a *matinée*, and when that was not convenient, he would hasten to take both mother and child in the evenings. The emotions of delight manifested by the afflicted creature were a source of pleasure. The mother, looking worlds of gratitude to him, tried to give utterance of her thankful feelings. In a short time the ushers and other employés, becoming familiar with the appearance of the mother and afflicted child, as the friends of Mr. Trenk, enabled them to attend the *matinées* without any further escort, as they received the most sedulous attention on entering, in being provided with choice seats. On the request, too, of Nathan, the managers were always most happy to admit them to rehearsals, a favor accorded to few.

Such unexpected kindness from Nathan induced Mrs. Russell, in the fulness of her heart, to endeavor to requite the obligation she supposed was incurred. Gradually a thousand little attentions on her part had led to greater friendship and intimacy, until he became, in her estimation, one of the family, and cherished as such. Her little son, a fine boy of two or three summers, and her helpless daughter, were much disappointed if an evening passed without a visit from him in the parlor or at the tea-table; while the kind mother's eyes beamed with delight at the pleasure his presence imparted to her little family.



The widow was fully impressed with Nathan's wealth from his personal appearance alone. She was equally satisfied of his exalted position in society, from the quantity of notes in pretty envelopes daily handed in at the front door to his address. That he should be so intimate and influential with artists was no less convincing; while his large supply of opera tickets was proof positive, to her innocent understanding, of his prodigality. Then to crown all, that he, so rich and fascinating, and caressed by the dress circle, should leave those beautiful creatures in enchanting full evening costume to come and sit by her and her darling little afflicted one, was far too much for her ever to expect, let alone express in words. But the grateful widow had to undergo one trial which almost broke her heart to think of. Quarter-day coming round, when Nathan would be sure to pay the stipulated sum for rent, how could she take it, and yet how refuse it—perhaps cause him to seek other apartments? The amount was of no consequence to her, as she was well provided without it. But before she had resolved upon what to do, the day arrived. Nathan, of course, handed her the money, when she burst into a flood of tears, and in sobs exclaimed: "No, no! You have been too much like a brother to my afflicted darling ever to accept any money more from you. I wish you to stay; we all would grieve if you leave us;" and half-choking, added: "If kindness could be repaid by gold, we would all be in your debt." Then, after another shower of tears, she cried: "I know money is no object to you, but still I cannot accept any." Here the tear-storm came on again with renewed violence, and was abated only by an assurance from Nathan that he had no intention of leaving; and, as to rent, she could fix her own price upon her rooms, as it was a matter entirely under her own control.



While Nathan pursued his walk down-town, the weeping widow sat at her sewing, half muttering to herself: How foolish I have made myself by crying at such a trifle, as he thought it was only a trifle. Hereupon the tears dropped from her eyes, which she wiped away, and after much difficulty she threaded her needle, to blush again at her folly, when he thought it only such a trifle. "Well, it is all over, anyhow!" she exclaimed, drawing a deep sigh; "and I feel easier about it. How his mother must have loved him, poor fellow!"

Nathan had his own thoughts as he walked down Broadway. "It must be a good thing to be rich, for I find it very comfortable to have even the reputation." With this reflection he turned into Tiffany's to purchase a box of ivory dominoes for the little boy and a pretty ring for the daughter. He paid for them with a gold piece, and directed them to be sent home.

"Well," said a fashionable young lady to her companion, as he quitted the establishment, "well, there is one good trait about him, anyhow; with all his dissipation and extravagance, he has a good heart in spending so much money in presents to little children."

When a person's actions and motives are, for the most part, unknown, if carefully observed he is liable to create false impressions, like objects seen dimly in moonlight. In the same way it pleased Nathan's good friends, from the little which they knew about him, to fill up his whole biography with a fancy sketch, with the most natural and agreeable outlines to themselves. Denying admittance to all visitors in the morning, it was easy to suppose he was sleeping off the last night's excesses; and if seen in Wall street in the afternoon, in the vicinity of the law office, he was pre-



sumed to be in search of that golden talisman so powerful both in oriental and occidental enchantments. The reports which sometimes extended beyond the dressing-rooms of *prime-donne* and sylphids, conveyed in a lunar obscurity, were in keeping with all other information about him. If he were seen telling a laughing, dancing nymph from Bohemia or Biscay, of the compliments bestowed upon her by an admiring public whose language she had never learned, her blushes were taken for confessions of improper confidence to another tale from his flattering tongue; and if a *prima donna*, with pensive brow, told him of her thousand troubles, he was believed to have been the cause of her sorrow, and intended adding new griefs where kindly he was imparting consolation.

---

## CHAPTER XII.

PRESSING invitations had been annually extended to Nathan from his friends at the Druidoaks to spend some portion of the summer season with them, which he had accepted; and he was always a most welcome addition to the choice circle of distinguished people met with at the villa. The yacht was ever at his disposal; and in it he would cruise in all directions, with some pleasant party on board under his sailing orders. When he returned from these delightful reunions to his rooms and law office in the city, he had a thousand commissions to execute for the novel-reading matron; nor was he ever wanting in a letter from her every few weeks. As these commissions were generally for the purchase of new and expensive books, or jewelry, or other



articles more extravagant than useful, Nathan became an acceptable and valuable customer at book-stores and places where his fashionable acquaintances were to be met with when shopping.

This lady of the Druidoaks had resolved on a visit to Saratoga with her family, and it was most convenient for her to have Nathan in her suite, to whom she had written. The Hon. Mr. Dryvis found time to write to him, also, on the subject, stating that pressing engagements prevented his travelling with his family, and desiring Nathan to take the charge of them. This was a very flattering as well as pleasing duty for the young man, and consequently he was seen at Saratoga soon after. The lady, with her brilliant equipage and lavish style of living, was, however, exclusive in that gay throng; nor was it many days before she became tired of the heat and monotony of the place, and displeased with the discomforts to which she was subjected.

Leaving these springs, she hastened on to Sharon. In the high hills and purer air she found more personal comfort, and, above all, many friends with whom her hours could pass agreeably. At first the change was not so acceptable to Nathan, as he missed that whirl of excitement and gaiety he had left at Saratoga. But in a few days he discovered if he had lost one set of pleasant acquaintances, he had found another no less agreeable. He was now among very many distinguished people, foreign ministers, European travellers, and those celebrated at home as statesmen, diplomatists, jurists, or advocates, and of all the other honorable professions of the land. With these were associated the families of the old and most wealthy of both the North and South. It seemed to Nathan that those who were the most renowned and the greatest ornaments of society had assembled here



for relaxation until the heats of summer were passed, regardless of the fashionable world at other places, and desirous only of the fresh air of the mountains, and the pleasant society of each other in excursions among the hills or in social communion under the stately colonnade in the perpetual cool evenings.

It was no reflection on Nathan's good taste to find him lingering on the porch listening to conversation among a knot of gentlemen discussing some grave, but to him deeply interesting question, while the ladies, many of bewitching loveliness, were awaiting impatiently his presence. He turned with a sigh from the gentlemen, where he had been silent, to become an actor among a circle of beauties who at another time would have had undivided fascinations for him.

The society at Sharon reminded him of the company often assembled at the Druidoaks. The difference, however, was in the prevailing topics discussed. At the banker's villa, whatever extent of information and talent was displayed, they were made secondary and subordinate to considerations of success in business affairs, as though every topic was viewed through a commercial medium; until one thoroughly infected with that atmosphere must in time have become inclined to estimate every important event with reference only to its mercantile value. In discussing men and their motives, however, a thorough insight into human nature was displayed, which evinced a perfect freedom from local or party prejudice, and a more liberal view of the various influences actuating the conduct of individuals.

Those, on the contrary, with whom Nathan was now in contact, were men of more enlarged understandings, greater cultivation of varied talents, and extensive knowledge, with perhaps less attention to personal accomplishments, with the



exception of accomplishments of an intellectual cast, such as poetry and others like it, those pleasing birthlets of literature and science. History, and its kindred studies; government and statistics, upon which it may be said to be founded; the influence of education, of passion, of principle, of climate, of moral culture, of interest, and of luxury, on individuals and nations; voyages, travels, and discoveries, with that familiarity with both ancient and modern learning characteristic of the student—all seemed to have been the constant thought and care of these with whom he now associated. In a word, they appeared to have read much, observed more, and reflected most upon all those subjects interesting to the mind which were to a great degree ignored at the banker's; and, besides this, the money article in their universal journal of information was the column which they dwelt least upon.

Impressed, as Nathan had been, with the intellectual superiority of the society at the Druids, and hoping some day to equal what he there witnessed around him, he now beheld the vast intellectual supremacy of this new circle of friends to those at the banker's. Where he formerly looked on in admiration, he now stood almost spell-bound, boy-like, in awe at the range, the grasp, and versatility of the human understanding, which a few casual and apparently careless remarks would unfold. These pleasant, sprightly, and epigrammatic entertainments he compared in his own mind to the sports of the boy-god playing with thunderbolts of a higher order of beings. Thus, on a beautiful morning, he would often find several gentlemen roaming in the woods near the springs, and perhaps loitering on a rock, or near a fallen log, to discuss some topic in ethical philosophy, or some novel theory started by one of them to elicit conversation. One day he



was gathering wild flowers alone, when he unexpectedly encountered a group thus occupied. They immediately made room right willingly for him on a fallen tree, to listen to the question on which they were discoursing. Nathan was startled with the first remark which he heard, uttered by a European traveller, M. Domat :

“I must confess that I have always thought too much importance was attached to the influence of Christianity in the work of civilization.”

“Where would be morality and honesty between man and man without it?” asked Mr. Gibson, an eminent lawyer.

“Where they were among the Jews, and the primitive Greeks, and the old Romans, if we can believe history.”

“But the Jews were isolated, and could not reform the world ; the Greeks and Romans became immoral, luxurious, and corrupt,” Gibson replied.

“Especially after the Christian era.”

“But not by the Christians.”

“Christianity, therefore,” said M. Domat, “did not save them, nor prevent their downfall as nations, nor their decline in civilization.”

“But on their ruins modern Christian civilization has sprung up.”

“True, upon their ruins, and out of the old materials, the code of laws of old Rome has once more made a modern Roman world,” said M. Domat, “governing the world.”

“Without Roman morals.”

“Without, perhaps, the private morals of the city of Rome when it was no longer Roman. But in the provinces individual conduct was of a higher standard ; how high we know not.”

“But it is private morals which is the foundation of mo-



derm civilization, and these we derive from Christianity," Gibson answered.

"Intelligence joined with rural pursuits will always make a virtuous people. But it is only good laws which will insure a good government, and we are more indebted to nations than to individuals for our present civilization. In other words, civilization is more indebted to the code of laws which protects private rights than to the Christian code, intended to influence individual duty."

"Do I then understand you," asked Mr. Gibson, "to say that the civil code of laws has contributed as much to civilization as Christianity?"

"That is the very question upon which I have long pondered. Nor must it be supposed if I answered in the affirmative that I admitted modern civilization to be the right road to the Millennium. Perhaps the world might now be in a more advanced state of intelligence and happiness without the Roman code; perhaps it is marching on to a second downfall of civilization under the same compilation; for it leads to private accumulations, to luxury, to selfishness and corruption, and consequent decay."

"That is true," said the lawyer; "those laws are for a commercial people, and their principles now form the basis of our jurisprudence."

"Christianity in turn," added Domat, "is at war with Roman and commercial cupidity; and if Christ were now on earth, perhaps he would overturn commerce as he did the tables of the bankers in the temple. The boast that modern civilization is due to Christianity may therefore be no honor to true religion."

"You do not seem, therefore," said the lawyer, "to have come to any conclusion on the subject."



"Other influences are now at work," said the traveller, "unknown at the time of the downfall of the Roman empire, leading to a greater dissemination of intelligence, with an equally high development of intellect. Perhaps these may counteract in time the preponderating influence of, and desire for, wealth and luxury. Who, then, can predict the future, when we have nothing in the past wherewith to draw an accurate comparison?"

"We are much indebted to you, M. Domat," said Mr. Gibson, "for your striking views on a point of such importance."

"It is but a poor recompense," he replied, bowing very low, "for the valuable information at all times received respecting your happy country."

"Apropos of compliments," interposed Col. Spencer, a rich planter, laughing, "I must thank you for demonstrating that these Northern nabobs are not Christians. They are inclined to call us heathens for having as many slaves as Abraham."

"But the slaves of the patriarch," interposed Doctor Gresham, "were all idolaters, and therefore permitted as bondsmen."

"My dear Doctor, are you turning abolitionist?" asked the Colonel, with a smile.

"Something of that character, when I find Southern gentlemen quoting Scripture to justify slavery. A weak argument is worse than none; and as I have some interest in negro property, I wish no documentary evidence of my rights to be drawn from Levitical law."

"You prefer the Roman?" said Col. Spencer.

"Yes," said the Doctor; "that is the higher law on private rights, and under which it seems Christians make fortunes."



Nathan strolled away in search of more wild flowers, in deep reflection. It was thus he listened daily to these discussions, and found food for meditation and mental improvement. His attention and evident appreciation had been marked by the gentlemen, and when he joined them in their excursions they soon discovered his latent aspirations, and were pleased to talk to him, to solve his doubts, and point out the sure paths leading to future eminence and success. He sought out sometimes the society of M. Domat, and when that learned foreigner found Trenk could converse in his own idiom, he poured forth his stores of curious knowledge in copious streams. Thus willing at all times to improve himself, he had become marked by the gentleman as a youth destined to rise in his profession; and from his conversation they were led to accord to him the possession of a superior mind. He had refrained from touching the piano, and had been equally cautious in avoiding the ball-room.

His attention to the ladies was only put in requisition when he met them at the bowling-alley, or the spring, or on those little excursions they took for flowers and exercise. If they viewed him as an ambitious young man, probably possessed of fortune, fond of books and the society of distinguished men, they were no less pleased with his agreeable, quiet manners, and the want of pretension indicative of the true gentleman. On his part, he was charmed with these beauties whose position would entitle them to great admiration in the most fashionable circles, thus passing their time in the summer repose amid these rocky hills, wooded valleys, and gushing streams, enjoying what was rural, simple, and natural. That he had not met some of them in society the previous winter was altogether accidental; partly due to their preferring small circles to the crowded saloons of their ambi-



tious lady acquaintances. They were of that class of good families who, recognised as among the most fashionable and exclusive, are still not esteemed as wedded to a continual round of nightly festivity. Preferring conversation to more exciting amusement, and books to the dull twaddle of dissipation, and poetry and painting to incessant supper-parties, they are seen without surprise at entertainments, or their absence noted without any special wonder. Thus capable of amusing themselves, or being amused in society, they possessed the freshness and shrinking delicacy soon lost under a continual glare of gaslight in crowded rooms, and could be pleasing or be pleased in quiet intercourse with a few friends. Nathan knew these people belonged to the most refined and exclusive circles in the city, and he was gratified to be himself among them on a footing to insure his renewing the acquaintance on their return home. His conversation and little services to the ladies had completely charmed them; and as they imagined he was an ambitious student, deep in books, and with lofty aspirations, they never dreamed he was possessed of accomplishments too often found only with the idle and dissipated, but which are equally acceptable to all refined people.

Nathan had been some weeks in this cool retreat before it became imperative that he should make his entrance in the ball-room. At last a hop was to come off, "in which," as a young gentleman expressed it, "the whole strength of Sharon was to spread itself." There had been much preparation for the event, and the enthusiasm among all promised a complete success. The foreign ladies, especially, set their hearts upon it; the band of music had for weeks been hard at work practising pieces for the occasion. It was even asserted that the orchestra had in rehearsal the Saraband, a



new waltzing figure then the prevailing rage in Paris. Some few of the ladies had heard of it from their acquaintances recently on the continent, and others had noticed it mentioned in the Parisian correspondence of the newspapers. The little danseuse from Biscay had, three months before, informed Nathan of this new attraction while procuring for him the music; and it had been one of his speculations to arrange the notes for a full band of brass instruments and to print them. Moreover, the little ballet-dancing friend had kindly taught him the steps, as she was to come out in it as a novelty, when the autumn campaign opened at Niblo's, when the gentleman arrived from Europe who was to assist her in the performance.

Nathan learned the happening of some breach of faith abroad, the piece being brought out in Paris sooner than was anticipated. This had hastened him in arranging the music, but still it was intended the Saraband should not be published until after the summer season. But, from its astonishing success, this could not be controlled by the music publishers, and Nathan first heard, with some surprise, that the piece was at Sharon. On the evening of the hop he had contented himself in waltzing with the little girls, his pets, those young beginners who were required by their inexorable mammas to depart at a certain hour, and who were now crowding their enjoyments in the term allotted. Being relieved of these, he joined a cluster of lady friends who were in pleasing admiration at the rich costume, and the still richer and brilliant display of diamonds of the lady of the Spanish Minister, who sat near to them in her youthful beauty and stately grandeur, well content to attract the gratified attention of so many people. She was tall, graceful, and a blonde; with large, speaking blue eyes, evidently enjoying



the scene around her, but as yet not taking any part in the dancing. At once the orchestra in the gallery struck up a new air, something so novel and exhilarating that all exclaimed: "The Saraband, the Saraband!" It commenced with a single trumpet-call, as though invoking a knight to the lists of the tournament, then followed by a low, soul-subduing symphony on several instruments, and next succeeded by the full band in an exciting, thrilling gallopade, so rich and harmonious, with a flood of melody gushing, overpowering, and bearing the feelings along on its golden stream, until it was almost impossible to refrain from rushing forth in some wild dance to keep time with steps to such ecstatic sounds. The Spanish lady, as much excited as others, rose to her feet, and addressing a friend at her side in her own language, exclaimed: "Must I listen to that and have no one to join me!" She looked around, and her eyes fell upon the ladies with Nathan. "Have none of these Señoritas," said she, still addressing her friend, "have none of these learned this beautiful step?"

"None but you, Niña, I suppose in this place have ever heard it before."

"*Que lastima*"—what a pity—murmured the beauty, sinking into her seat, in deep disappointment.

Nathan quietly approached the foreign lady, whom he knew slightly, and in the most deferential tone said to her in pure Castilian: "Would the Señorita accept me as a partner in the Saraband?" extending at the same time his hand to her.

With that grace and ease, almost abandon, for which these fascinating creatures, when excited, are so celebrated, she seized his glove, exclaiming: "Most willingly!" as she hurried him to the upper part of the ball-room. Again the



solo-call sounded from the trumpet, and the space in the centre of the saloon was left vacant through its entire extent. Again the symphony followed, but they neither moved nor spoke, as all eyes were fixed on their tall and graceful forms standing like classic statues awaiting the nod of some divinity to give them life. Another burst of music was heard, and away they bounded in a whirling, maddening flight, like the laughing hours chased by the brilliant rays of Apollo. "How beautiful!" was the exclamation on every tongue, as in every step was seen some new grace and charming novelty. Tripping down the room in rapid flight, or whirling in the mazes of a magic waltz, or moving alone with the voluptuous languor of waving arms and twinkling feet, keeping time and gesture to each note, they slowly regained their first position, where the music met them with another maddening strain, to hurl them down the room again in another rapid stream of giddy, graceful motion.

An hour after, Nathan was seen on the colonnade seeking the cool breeze blowing. Near to him Mr. Gibson was seated, with his feet resting on a column, smoking a cigar in silent meditation. At last, removing it from his mouth, and brushing off the ashes at the end of the fragrant weed with his little finger, he remarked to Nathan: "It is seldom, Mr. Trenk, success in the ball-room leads to success at the bar; which do you prefer?"

"I regret," said Nathan, "that you do not approve of my waltzing."

"I beg your pardon. I not only approve, but admire it much, very much. It was a rich exhibition I shall long remember, as I have never witnessed its equal; and, were I young again, would envy you."

"Why, then, should it be an obstacle to my success?"



"Because you will be too much wanted in society to resist its caresses and fascinations. Will you not succumb to the blandishments with which you are repaid?"

"I hope not," said Nathan.

"Many a man of talents, of genius, of my acquaintance, has been lost in being cursed, yes, cursed, with fascinating accomplishments by the temptations into which they led. Let me hope you will remember the danger."

---

### CHAPTER XIII.

SUCH were some of the incidents of Nathan's life at the time the accommodating Mr. Dewlap waited upon him at his rooms. Jimmy descended the flight of steps when the front door was shut behind him, shutting out at the same time all hope of the young gentleman's name ever gracing his free list. But as that business was ended, the considerate Dewlap turned his attention next to the request of Mr. Nevil, whom he determined to call on without fail.

Punctual, therefore, to his appointment, the next day Jimmy rang at the gentleman's door and was admitted. He was soon honored with a commission in Dewlap's line of business, and was about taking his leave, when Nevil asked him carelessly if he had found Mr. Trenk. Jimmy replied that he had, and mentioned the street and number where he lodged.

"Do you know much about him, Mr. Dewlap?"

"Nothing particular, except that he is very rich, very extravagant, very dissipated, and a pretty fast young gentleman generally."

"Then he must have many around him to aid in spending



pleasantly his leisure hours and spare cash," remarked Nevil.

"Not many," said Jimmy with a knowing look. "He is deep, very deep; I can make nothing out of him."

"He must be deep in that case," answered Nevil, thoughtfully, with a quiet smile.

"I only meant to say," Jimmy replied, correcting himself, "that I can learn nothing in particular about him."

"Except that he is rich, dissipated, and so forth," said Nevil, as Dewlap departed.

"Rich," said Nevil aloud to himself, "very extravagant, very dissipated, and a pretty fast young man generally. Well, that is an enviable reputation to commence life with. Not a word of it true, yet having universal belief. Yes, Jimmy Dewlap, he is deep, too deep for your plummet. But is it possible the boy is playing a part, and assisting in the general deception?"

Mr. Nevil was a single gentleman, about thirty-five years of age, tall, muscular, with dark hair and large dark eyes, with beautiful features; reputed to be a most handsome, intellectual, and accomplished gentleman. He resided in a superb house on the avenue alone with his domestics, although his parents and young sister dwelt only a few doors distant. He had graduated at Yale, and then entered the academy at West Point to receive a military education. At the end of four years he was brevetted as a lieutenant in the army. In a few months he not only found himself with his regiment, but in battle. At the close of two rugged campaigns the war closed, when he resigned his commission and went abroad.

It was well known that on his return he was not blessed with sufficient fortune to be idle; nor would it have suited



either his taste or disposition to lead an indolent life under any circumstances. But it was observed that all the speculations in which he embarked were prosperous. His cash account at bank was in a respectable figure, and the quantity of shares of stock in railroads and other companies was gradually swelling in bulk in his portfolio. Yet Mr. Nevil could not be said to be in business. His time was generally spent in seclusion in some useful occupation. A few hours were given to Wall street, but that was all known of him down town. He was a kind, attentive, and affectionate son and brother, and, of course, was the idol of his family. His father, an aged gentleman, formerly an extensive merchant, had retired in consequence of ill-health, with ample means, to be sure, but not with the fortune he would have ultimately secured. But the old gentleman, even without a princely income, was viewed as one of the merchant princes in retirement, from his high character and acknowledged talents. His son inherited the father's genius in commercial affairs, without, apparently, embarking actively in the pursuit. He declined at all times to act as a director, or president, or trustee, or treasurer, or in any other capacity in the institutions where he was known. His movements, although closely watched in Wall street, were seldom understood by others until demonstrated by the results of his calculation at the Exchange. He avoided entering into combinations in any schemes afloat; nor did he express opinions to influence those who desired to consult him. Silent as the statue of Mercury, that deity patron alike to bankers and burglars, he did not permit his lips to betray his thoughts or actions; nor did he suffer the many whom he knew on the street ever to detain him in conversation.

In a few years he was supposed to have amassed a fortune,



while the expensive establishment he now had around him confirmed the general opinion.

Mr. Dewlap had scarcely left the house before Mr. Martin, a well known stock-broker, entered. He took a seat without much ceremony, and opened a bundle of papers in his hands.

"What news this morning?" said Nevil.

"Not much," said the broker, still intent on his papers.

"Your bundle appears formidable. Am I to expect bad news?"

Mr. Martin with a pleasant smile answered: "If the Bituminous Coal Company's stock running down to forty, that is, fifteen per cent. in a week, is bad news to you."

"So I see by the papers," said Nevil. "That is better by ten per cent. than you expected."

"It is that difference on two thousand shares."

"We will realize, Mr. Martin, at once to give us thirty thousand dollars as an item for present operations."

"Had we not better hold on for a day or two?" asked the broker.

"Not an hour, not an hour. The stock is solid and will rise; I know what sent it down."

"What was it?" eagerly asked the broker.

But Nevil, without replying to the question, said: "Let us turn to business."

Mr. Martin thereupon took up his memorandum. "First on the list the Long Valley Railroad wants a loan of fifty thousand, to take up some small floating debts."

"To make good, rather, the amount requisite for a full share dividend," said Nevil.

Martin paused for a moment before he remarked: "Then



we had better not touch it; the stock will tumble on our hands."

"By all means take it," said Nevil. "Sell short one thousand shares to-day. Then sell out all your stock on hand to-morrow; the day after it will be known the dividend was paid with money loaned for that purpose."

"According to that scheme we can make about fifteen thousand in less than a week," said the broker.

"What next?" Nevil inquired.

"Shall we loan on the Pewter Navigation stock?" asked Martin, referring to his memorandum.

"That company is failing, and will end in fraud."

"Let us not, then, for gracious' sake," said the broker, "be mixed up in it," recoiling in horror from the thought of his name being linked with a swindle.

"Make yourself easy, Mr. Martin. If we loan money on an over-issue of stock, are we not the victims instead of the partners in the conspiracy?"

"To be sure we are, and that is much worse, much worse," he exclaimed, with emphatic Wall street indignation.

"Restrain your imaginary wrath and listen to me," said Nevil, calmly. "Loan on the stock with twenty-five per cent. margin, and sell as fast as you get it. You may also sell short a thousand shares."

"How much capital will this take; let me see," said the broker, making a verbal calculation on his fingers, and then adding: "About thirty thousand dollars."

"Not a dollar," Nevil replied, slowly.

The broker stared at him in astonishment.

"Listen," said Nevil, "while I explain the operation. When they deposit the stock, tell them to call in an hour or



two ; you sell it at once, and give them seventy-five and you keep twenty-five of the proceeds."

"But they may want to redeem their stock."

"In that event you can purchase every day henceforth the shares in the market at a less figure than you previously sold. Remember they are falling rapidly, and the company must go down."

The most benign smile suffused the benevolent countenance of the broker as a perception of the results dawned upon his mercantile mind.

"I wish to know, Mr. Martin, if you fully understand the details of this operation?"

"Understand the working of it?" said Martin, figuring in his mind the certificates handed to him, his rushing frantically to the Stock Board, then selling, then a bank check, then a deposit of the same after being certified, then at his office, and then his own check on the loan. "But why do they not sell the stock for themselves instead of borrowing on it?"

"A very natural question," answered Nevil; "but every hypothecation in the street is subject to the same inquiry. They may win, but we must win."

"Do you know their game?" asked the broker.

Nevil only raised his eyebrows as he inquired what came next.

Mr. Martin was the gentleman's confidential broker, to whom he paid a fixed percentage on the profits of his operations. His great merit to the confidence of Mr. Nevil was his sterling honesty, secresy, and dread of stock operations, which prevented him from ever gambling at the Exchange. He had a large family, and was at one time almost reduced to want in consequence of some forgeries successfully prac-



tised upon him. Nevil knew him, and on learning his misfortune gave him a helping hand, when all his other acquaintances were disposed to drive him out of the street as "broke."

Mr. Nevil did not claim much philanthropic commendation for his timely aid to Martin. Like Diogenes, he wanted to find an honest man for his purposes, and found him in Wall street. As Mr. Martin bundled up his papers preparatory to leaving, Nevil remarked: "Now, remember, I expect to see you the object of extensive commiseration some of these days, the victim of misplaced confidence in the Pewter Navigation." In truth, only a few weeks thereafter, one of the leading morning journals had the following paragraph in its money article:

"The Pewter has gone to pot, as we predicted. The metal was found more attractive than gold, and we are afraid some of our friends have a pile of it on hand. The stock within a month has fallen from par to a penny, and the brokers must suffer severely who advanced on its worthless certificates. A good many moneyed men were only astonished, but the worthy Martin may be said to be 'putrefied.' We learn that those who loaned on a chattel mortgage on the steamers will recover nothing, as Judge Delay has decided on full argument that the first mortgage on the landed property covers the vessels, they being part of the freehold. It appears the steamers were attached to the dock by a very strong hawser, which made them fixtures or part of the realty—part of the working machinery of the company. So it is all in my eye and Biddy Martin."

But to return to the natural current of events. When the worthy broker quitted Mr. Nevil, with some half formed anticipations of the way he might figure in the papers, he



met an acquaintance on the avenue whose steps were leading, like his own, down town. Mr. Tantis had seen Martin leaving Mr. Nevil's stately mansion, and therefore longed to have a conversation with him. Mr. Tantis was a street broker, with the soul moreover of a sycophant and flunkey. To be seen in company with a gentleman who had been with the great Charles Nevil was flattering to his mighty genius. It was something to think over and talk about for a week. Mr. Tantis had been once in the navy, which he had quit, according to his unwritten autobiography, when he was a midshipman, because the department objected to his quotation marks in official correspondence. He said the rule in the service was that no officer was allowed to mark more than one line in three as a quotation, nor more than two single words in a line. This he could not put up with, and resigned, to the great detriment of our future naval glory. Mr. Tantis had next essayed to spread happiness and opium over the Celestial Empire, and after many vicissitudes of fortune returned to his native city to cultivate and diffuse that fine code of morals soon acquired among the children of Confucius. Mr. Tantis could not be said to be learned, nor of a high order of intellect. He could talk, and scheme, and enter into speculations at a moment's notice; and although he was now past the meridian of life, he was as active as a boy, being rather slim and juvenile in appearance, dressing neatly in the height of the fashion.

"I say, Martin, you ought to make a good thing out of Charles Nevil, as he knows a thing or two," was the opening salutation of Tantis, taking his arm.

"Yes," said the broker; "Mr. Nevil has a clear conception of business affairs."

"None more so; he is at the head of the street, and



lucky. It is not in mortals to command the market, but he sometimes hits it hard."

"I think Mr. Nevil is not much inclined to invest at present," said the cautious Martin.

"Why don't he go a flyer on the Pewter, and soar on eagle pinion in the tide that bears on to big dividends, and makes ambition virtue?"

"You seem, Mr. Tantis, to have a good opinion of the Navigation stock."

"Nothing shorter. I would take it like a friend to my soul, and sip the goblet of its rich temptation. I am now particularly strong upon it. And on a long line of shares, a full multiplication table of figures, and on its empyrean heights I will clutch the prize, success."

"Operating for a rise?" said Martin.

"It must go up, if there be honesty in man," Tantis replied, with great confidence. To which his friend did not dissent.

"I have staked my all," continued Tantis, "my all upon the Pewter, and will stand the hazard of a whole board of directors."

"You gentlemen who are in the secret must know," said the complimentary Martin, at the same moment releasing his arm and turning up Waverley Place, as Tantis walked on to the Washington Parade Ground.

Something in the words and manner of Martin grated on the stock nerves of the classic street broker, and he seated himself on a bench under the trees of the Parade to think over the language. The thick falling leaves imparted a melancholy feeling, and all his courage for great daring in stock speculations oozed out.

"Something must be wrong about the Pewter," said he,



musings. "Martin did not say it, nor mean to say it; but I felt it sticking out. He generally laughs when I talk the grandiloquent, but it was no go this morning."

Mr. Tantis had bought the stock on time, and could only gain in the event of a rise in the price of shares. If the stock fell, he would lose the five per cent. he had put up on the hundred shares, that is to say, he would sacrifice five hundred dollars, the sum total of his available capital. The thick perspiration stood on his forehead, and as he wiped it away with his scented handkerchief, he repeated to himself: "Nevil not investing at present; that looks bearish; a clear conception of business affairs, to be sure. And then Martin threw a chill on the Pewter; that looks bearish again." Now Tantis had the wisdom which is called cunning, and from the limited range of mental vision such people possess, he often made sad mistakes. He could not rely on his own judgment, generally led by some one; and on the present occasion his faith was unbounded in the directory of the Pewter. But then the shadow of an opinion from Nevil was to him as certain as the fate presaged of old by an oracle of Delphos.

He hastened to Wall street, and realized at once on his contract for the hundred shares, which left him besides his investment a hundred dollars profit. During the day he found out that Martin was dealing in the stock, and that at once decided him. He immediately put out a contract to deliver a hundred shares in thirty days at par, the then selling price, and deposited his six hundred dollars as security. A few days thereafter the stocks had fallen five per cent., and his broker allowed him to duplicate his contract without any further deposit. Before the week closed, the indefatigable Tantis had induced others to join him, and was interested in many more contracts, all based upon a depreciation in the



price of the stock. He was now in a fair way of making some thousands, and, with the golden prospect before him, permitted half the time to expire, when he was appalled by the information that Mr. Martin was loaning money and taking this stock as security. Being assured by the broker himself that it was true, he immediately "realized," as it is called, in hot haste, and found himself in the possession of twenty thousand dollars.

When the final explosion of the company happened; when many men were ruined in fortune by the event; when some had lost character by the transaction, while others were in the full tide of rejoicing over their profits, and lauding their own sagacity, Mr. Tantis was standing about the hour of noon, leaning with his back against the counter in Delmonico's spacious bar-room. He had a choice circle of admiring friends around him, who were doing him the honor of joining in sherry-cobblers all round. Mr. Tantis was imbibing his beverage through a long straw, and as he inserted the agricultural tube into the little icebergs in his glass, with all the precision with which a polar navigator would display with his setting-pole in the pack of the Arctic ocean, he thus disburdened his mind, having first pushed his hat back free from his beautiful narrow brows, as is the custom with the orators of that forum when about to hold forth: "I had long made up my mind, gentlemen, that the bottom must fall out of that concern. The directors were too sanguine, and were running the thing into the ground. They were putting on the string when they ought to have held hard on the ribbons. I told them so over and over again; but it was no use. When the bears want to destroy, they let their chain loose. I told them to hold up hard; but instead of that, they advised me to buy. I thought they were fluent, but preferred being



affluent myself, and therefore sold. I pity poor Martin, but he would not listen to reason. Coming down town one morning, I pointed out to him that the Pewter must burst, and cautioned him not to touch the stock with a fifty-two-forty pole. He said I was generally right, and all that sort of thing; for Martin is an honest, straightforward, candid man. But I was afraid he was then too deep into it, or he would have backed out after what I told him. He turned away from me rather abruptly, and I then knew he was a goner."

"But why, Tantis, did you close?" said one of the admiring sons of St. Crispin-refresher; "why did you realize when the stock was up to fifty per cent.?"

This question was rather difficult to answer, and might lead to the supposition that Tantis quitted the game at the very time when the immense profits were the most certain to follow by holding on.

"Why did I realize!" said he, slowly shaking the ice round in his glass, and then taking a long-suck through the straw to gain time. "The fact is," said he at length, setting down the goblet on the counter, "I was afraid the brokers would not respond if I came it much stronger."

"But then was your time to put out a new line," said another, depositing his empty glass and taking his leave, with the impression that Mr. Tantis was only a lucky fool.



## CHAPTER XIV.

THE autumnal sessions of the courts had now commenced, at which Nathan Trenk was admitted to practice. It was not long before he became sensible that although unhappy as to his parentage, he was still the favorite of fortune in other matters. Perplexing as it always is to a young lawyer to know how to obtain business, or to conduct it properly when obtained, Nathan was almost free from these inquiries and doubts that hang like dark clouds over these questions. Baron Altberg, a German gentleman, had been in this country for several years as agent and part owner in a number of land or colonizing schemes, in which some enterprising Americans had induced his countrymen to embark large sums. The Baron had found himself involved in litigation and in an extensive correspondence, which were unsatisfactory and seemed to be interminable. The incidental assistance Nathan rendered him in conducting his home correspondence, made a favorable impression upon the generous-hearted German. He conversed so much and so often with Nathan on his troubles and difficulties, that when admitted to the bar he had learned and understood all of the Baron's embarrassments. Altberg also complained bitterly of the lawyers not giving more time and attention to his affairs. He employed Nathan at once to aid him in his business; and it was not many months before Trenk reduced the whole negotiation to a few simple elements, which greatly relieved the Baron's labors, and still more his mind from annoying anxiety. Nathan assiduously applied his leisure time to the mastering of the land-laws and local systems of jurisprudence of the States in which the property was situated,



and thereby was enabled to counsel the Baron on all points.

By means of this business he was brought into active contact with the whole circle of the Baron's acquaintance, which, in a short time, became very profitable. Altberg soon perceived the necessity for a clerk to Nathan, as he was assuming the burden from which the Baron was relieved. Soon after, another clerk was required, and additional business coming in, even a third had to be employed. His office now began to throng with clients or persons resorting there for information. He was eagerly sought after by other lawyers with important cases to prepare, in which foreign witnesses or documents had to be examined in foreign languages. He blushed, however, to think of the little, shabby rooms in which he was immured in office hours, and hoped to find more spacious quarters. About this time, too, a rage for reform in the size and structure of law apartments set in, and the desire for more comfort and elegance spread over the legal profession.

The Baron was about returning to Europe, leaving Nathan in charge of his interests. This would furnish him with additional business, requiring additional office-space; and he now imagined himself justified in renting a most beautiful and elegant suite of four rooms, constructed especially for offices, in one of those lofty structures which the banks and other corporations were then completing. This was a daring movement, as the rent was enormous, but it was successful. Additional business still flowed in, and in his quiet, methodical, energetic habit, he readily disposed of it all.

From ten o'clock in the morning till near sundown, Nathan was to be seen in his luxurious inner-room intent on the affairs with which he was intrusted, unless he was absent at



the courts. In the evening he found time to indulge in relaxation or in his favorite amusements in the intervals not set apart for his studies, which he still pursued amidst his professional occupation or pleasure. But it was in the early hours of morning he profited most by books or reflection; and as the incessant round of parties, with the monotony of the same faces and scenes, began to lose their attractions, he would often find himself at night remaining at home to spend some happy hours with the interesting little boy and the little cripple of Mrs. Russell. The poor afflicted girl watched the clouds through the day, and if the weather portended a storm, she clapped her emaciated hands in ecstasy, hoping that Mr. Trenk would spend the rainy evening with her and her little brother.

But Nathan's expenses seemed to increase with the increase of his income. It was apparent the good Miss Howard no longer superintended his finances. A pair of beautiful bay horses and a carriage were soon added to his establishment, and again he was tempted to purchase a fine saddle-horse. Here the quadrupedal mania upon his pocket abated for the present; but as it is both a virulent and expensive disease, it is seldom overcome until it has run its course. It is possible he would have still further increased his stud, had he not recoiled from the intimate contact and familiarity with vulgar people which it tended to encourage. The jockeys and stable-boys began to accost him on terms of equality, and to give him such gratuitous scientific lectures on the points of animals, that he turned with horror from such company and contamination. He soon learned that he knew nothing about horses, and became sensible that, to acquire any knowledge, he would have to submit to be swindled largely by coarse, illiterate knaves.



The climate of New York is, for the most part, unfavorable to equestrian exercise. The heat and summer sun, the cold of winter, with its ice and snows, all discourage the hope of much pleasure in the saddle. Without doubt the most invigorating and fascinating of rural amusements, it is one not much cultivated in our cities. Trotting horses in harness are substituted, that cockney imitation only preferable to an avenue railroad horse-car because it is more expensive and exclusive. But no one will pretend to call exercise on wheels an equestrian amusement, where the display is in the fabrics of leather, iron, wood, varnish, and gilding, and the excitement, the choice quality of cigars in starting, or the "gin-sling" and "brandy-smash" with which every milestone is to be honored. But a common dust falls heavily and equally on the gentleman, the blackleg, and the billiard-marker in Harlem Lane, and in the road to the race-course on Long Island, when on a glorious drive; and if they can occasionally catch a glimpse of the curbstone on either side, they may sigh for the region of fresh air beyond their reach or expectations. The pleasure of agreeable society or conversation they never aspire to, for money cannot buy them, nor would they be appreciated as equal to patent paint and silver-plating.

Perhaps when the metropolis is studded with spacious parks, the equestrian will find protection from the burning sun under their leafy trees, and relief from the heated atmosphere in the fast walking pace of his animal, a gait most suitable to both horse and rider, and the only one for comfort in our summer months. Then horses will be admired once more for their beauty and action, and their proper management will once more form a part of liberal education and graceful accomplishment for both ladies and gentlemen.

It was with some such reflections as these that Nathan



became imbued by the gentlemen at Sharon, when some of them spoke of exercise on horseback as an element of existence like air, or heat, or water, and each ascribed some peculiar excellence to it. But all of them, except those resident in cities, extolled it, as not only a duty, but as a virtue, imparting both pleasure and vigor to the intellect. Nathan, however, soon became tired of his horse, as thousands have before and will again, who rashly imagine a seat in the saddle is a natural instinct which need not be learned when young, when the excitement compensates for the pain in learning; or later in life when a determination to persevere supplies the want of novelty until the proper habit and action are acquired. He did not even understand that the horses were not all alike in the movements, although they might differ in size, or color, or price; nor that Tattersall's could not turn out nags to order like Lawrence or Brewster can produce a carriage. But it is enough to know he did not admire his saddle-horse any more than a juvenile performer revels in delight on his first cigar as he inhales the smoke from its burning leaf. Twenty years hence, all gentlemen and ladies in the metropolis will know much more of the saddle than is now acquired by most of them.

But when he was three years at the bar he was a proficient in both the practice and principles of law. His industry in attention to business, and his studies and reflections at home, made him one of the best legal scholars of the city. His aspirations as an orator had not yet been gratified, as the time had not arrived, and he was content to wait. He was steadily working his way to distinction, as he was rising in the estimation of the profession and of those whose opinions were entitled to the greatest respect. The impression still prevailed that he was wealthy and also dissipated. The air



of refined, of polished luxury, which pervaded his actions and style of living, caused some to suppose his industry was prompted by a keen, deep intellect to amass large sums with which to gratify dissolute habits or expensive tastes ; and at times when he was puring over masterly, abstruse expositions of constitutional law, some of his admirers imagined him absorbed in the calculations of chances at the faro-table, watching heavy stakes.

The labor devoted to the grasping of principles and to the unravelling of intricate details of business being unknown to the world, made the results appear as flashes of genius, as inspirations of the moment that the exigency of the occasion suddenly called forth. Indeed, his extravagance only became perceptible to all, as he was now living up to his constantly increasing income. He had lost his caution and sense of economy while his mind was occupied with abstruse questions in law and with ambitious schemes. But no corroding care burdened his mind. He was still the same placid, light, airy, agreeable gentleman, especially when among ladies. True, he was thoughtful when consulted by gentlemen about business, but his brow relaxed whenever the matter in hand was solved.

He was seen as much in society as ever, and it was perceptible his circle was much enlarged, and, withal, more select. He was rapidly becoming a great favorite with those who were themselves favorites in exclusive places. He was establishing a position as one whose information was always, not only correct, but extensive, whose opinion was conclusive, and whose taste and accomplishments, in some respects, were unrivalled ; and above all, whose handsome form and elegant manners, embellished with the most exquisite art in dress, would of themselves have furnished a world of attractions.



If society knew that he was dissipated, leading a dissolute life, he did not obtrude any evidence of it upon others, and as they had no visible knowledge on the subject, they were not bound to observe nor to interfere with that which was none of their affair. It was a pity which could not be helped, and as gentlemen were jealous of him, it was natural they should exaggerate. On the whole, so long as he was received everywhere, and petted and courted by everybody, they were not going to make themselves ridiculous. But when some of the sagest even of widows looked in his innocent, manly, and expressive face, as he sang a touching, plaintive song, or when engaged in sprightly conversation, they wondered to themselves with laughing eyes how one so wicked could thus assume the garb and mien of such artless sincerity and simplicity.

The pious exhortation of Burk, with uplifted hands and eyes, as he implored "brother Nicolas," in his burlesque moods, to shun temptation and Trenk, could not influence Sabina against Nathan. "This exemplary gentleman," Burk said, "whose walk was to the church door, and whose conversation suited consumptive maidens, sometimes was led to the lair of that howling lion in the wilderness, that ensnarer of mankind and siren among sirens, the wicked but particularly agreeable Trenk." Mr. Sabina was not only a visitor of Nathan's, but also one of his greatest admirers, despite the horrible stories told. He would visit him at his rooms at Mrs. Russell's, and he would listen enraptured to Nathan's music. Something was in the tone of his voice that filled Sabina's soul with delight as well as astonishment. Nor would it be easy to explain this admiration without a slight account of Sabina's own idiosyncrasy.

It is already known Sabina was an excellent mimic and



ventriloquist, admirable in pantomime. But it was known to a few only that his sense of hearing was intensely vivid or acute, almost to become painful, although it was the sense above all others through which his most delightful sensations were experienced. In recompense to Nathan for his entertainment, he would sometimes exhibit those powers of his voice in the production of sounds almost superhuman. Whatever sound struck upon his ear, come from whatever quarter, he would reproduce its counterpart either from his voice or from artificial combinations. He seemed to possess a gamut expressive of every mental or physical emotion in all animated nature. He would imitate the cry of an infant in pain, and prolong the same until you recognised the young of various animals uttering their distress in the same note indefinitely, until the wails of baby, beast, and bird were known by that acoustic mark blended into the original elemental sound. The wild outburst of a mother weeping the loss of her child was echoed back by the ferocious beast in his savage lair, or in the cooing of the gentle feathered warbler on the tree, each in harmony, and all uttering the one anthem of despair in unison to the Almighty for help and hope. Thus again the strains that Adam may have addressed to our common mother in Paradise in tones of affection and love, were imitated by the various quadrupeds in mountain and valley, and by the other creatures floating in the sea or upper air.

These were sounds not modified in mankind by intellectual culture, being the natural outpourings of the heart. Next he produced those which the impress of humanity had varied, of the baser passions of hate, rage, and revenge. The yell of the human voice was like, and yet unlike, the scream of the beast or bird of prey, and the agonized outcry of man only



faintly resembled the muffled bellow of the lion or wild bull.

Again he portrayed those peculiar sounds of emotion in the human race where animals, devoid of intellect, are mute. He imitated or rather reproduced—for the exhibition was of a higher order than imitation, being life-like itself—that sound and sensation representing happiness—a state of existence expressed by mankind only in laughter. He gave the laugh of the old, of middle-aged, of the young of both sexes; the laugh of the semi-civilized and of the savage; each diminishing in gushing, joyous melody, until terminating in the discordant chatter of the grinning monkey or the rasping gibber of the Zambo ape of the Equator.

Again he would amuse Nathan with the primitive note of each animal, its phonetic name given at the dawn of creation to distinguish it from all others, by which recognised in some human language, savage or civilized, ancient or modern. He instanced the *tetix*, the lingual index among the Greeks of the grasshopper or locust, who adorned their hair with its golden counterfeit; the *taon*, the Persian for peacock; our own whip-poor-will, whose plaintive note furnishes its own name; the Aztec *guahalote*, the turkey, the great and only domestic fowl of ancient Mexican semi-civilization; and the *charra*, the tree-locust, cicada, of the natives of the South Sea.

In exhibiting this phonetic language the sound sometimes proceeded from the nose, sometimes from the throat, sometimes deeper down on the breast, perhaps lower still; at other times a species of ventriloquism left it uncertain from whence coming, which Sabina, however, said was not ventriloquial, but a natural sound in an animal—a sound the human organs could reproduce by cultivation; all being names whereby Adam called the beasts of the field and fowls



of the air around him in the garden of Eden, and which man only could pronounce.

When Sabina gave the primitive note of the grasshopper, or peacock, or whip-poor-will, or turkey, or tree-locust, Nathan recognised the imitation as perfect in sound, and not merely a faint resemblance which a few experiments might equal. Sabina went even into the misnomers given to animals by nations who, observing them at certain seasons only, as game for instance, on the hunting-grounds, mistook some cry or call as the primitive note, when it was one expressive of an emotion that had a sound radical with the cry of other animals, and not exclusively its own.

It was impossible for Nathan to perceive whether Sabina was pursuing this singular investigation of the original universal language for the purposes of some new doctrine in religion, or for some new science. It was only by accident Sabina let fall trivial expressions that encouraged the opinion he was interested at all in the study beyond the amusement of the passing moment, and was thus dissipating the hours of his apparently quiet and harmless existence.

---

## CHAPTER XV.

It was seldom Nathan admitted any visitor to his rooms. He knew how little time would be at his own disposal if his studies were interrupted at all hours by such invasions. But becoming interested in the phonetic exhibitions of Sabina, he extended invitations to him on particular occasions to call, when they could alone discourse about matters to which



they were both attracted. With very few exceptions, however, Trenk was always alone at home with the bright little boy and interesting cripple. These were his only company; for the mother was content to look on their amusement in silence, fully gratified in witnessing the happiness of her darling children. The young ones seemed to mark Nathan's departure in the morning and return in the evening as the most important events of the day.

When he was absent, they had much to tell their mother about him, and to talk over what they would do to please him when he came. Bob, the black-eyed and rosy-cheeked boy, was a healthy, manly little fellow. He knew he dare not touch any article in Mr. Trenk's rooms; but this interdiction did not forbid his visiting the third story sometimes, and gazing in wonder and gratified astonishment at the splendor of all objects around. He would stand in mute amazement looking at the paintings, and busts, and bronze statuettes adorning the rooms in profusion. He would slowly walk round the tables on which the various and numerous musical instruments were placed, and with Herculean strength bring a chair across the floor to stand upon and look down on sheets of printed music to see the pictures with which each was embellished. His favorite was the figure of a sylphid, bounding through the air in flimsy, flowing drapery, with one toe resting on the highest note in a line of music, indicative, no doubt, of the greatest flight in art; but which Bob thought must be very painful to her foot thus to be kept standing on something sharp as a pin. He told his mother and sister all about it frequently, and was much comforted when they agreed with him that it was a pity for the pretty lady with the wreath of roses in her hand.

Bob would occasionally insert his hand cautiously into a



boxing-glove, and imagine himself coming up behind Mr. Trenk to give him a blow that would frighten him very much. Then again he would essay to test his vigorous athletic powers in lifting a dumb-bell from the floor, and with much straining it would be elevated three inches, to fall with some noise, most probably on his toes, which accident, being unforeseen, would generally close the performance for that day. But he would again steal up-stairs to place some new toy of recent purchase in the most conspicuous place on the writing-table for Mr. Trenk's admiration and delight when he returned home; and if he received a story-book with yellow cover and blazing pictures, in the full effulgence of blue, green, and crimson paint, he would place the gem of decorated literature on the same table, with a paper weight upon it to keep it open at the most attractive page. Then, if he heard a noise, he would run to the landing and look down through the baluster to see if any one were coming; and perhaps hasten down step by step, with left foot always foremost, holding on to guard against a fall, and stopping in silence at regular intervals to rest his little legs and to take a fresh reconnoissance over the spiral staircase. One afternoon he thus entered the rooms, and as his little shoes were slightly soiled from walking, he took them off preparatory to pushing the chair for another examination of the beautiful lady with the roses. But, for some preliminary purpose, he had climbed to a large, luxurious, leather-lined arm-chair, and almost instantly had fallen asleep in one of its ample corners. Nathan entered soon after, and found him sleeping cosily, with the shoes placed side by side on his table.

The scene was one of happy innocence and repose; the little fellow in peaceful slumber, sinking to rest without care, or trouble, or pain, and his shoes indicating his obedience to



instruction to keep them off the chairs, and yet breaking the spirit of the rule in putting them in guileless confidence where they would be a greater profanation. Nathan threw himself into his accustomed seat to muse on the quiet scene, and almost uttered an apostrophe to the little shoes before him. How many tender, and sometimes mournful, emotions do the sight of little shoes awaken; what endearing recollections do they often revive; what pleasant scenes are associated with them! They are mementoes of life, of action, of innocence, of happy childhood; and how many of them are tenderly hid away in secret receptacles, with other precious articles, when the little feet for which they were made are mouldering in the parent earth. With what pleasure do beaming eyes behold them set side by side at night, when the little weary limbs are resting in tranquil slumbers which refresh for to-morrow's many more unquiet hours; what music in them when heard in sweet accompaniment to prattling tongues, returning home from an excursion, when a mother's anxious heart forebodes some calamity from the long delay!

Nathan tenderly took the sleeping child in his arms, and soothingly kissed him awake, in gentle tones, such as should always be addressed to infancy asleep. The boy slowly opened his large eyes to throw his arms almost convulsively around the neck of Nathan. He sat upon Trenk's knee, and as he rubbed his long eyelashes he seemed but half conscious of his locality. His little lips gave utterance to words Nathan could not comprehend. He spoke of trees and ships; the bird with music; a drum and pretty lady; of flowers and waving flags; of tears, and toys, and little girls; in joyous remembrance of his passing dream, in which he was once more revelling, and still in wonder where it was all gone;



for as yet his baby mind knew not the stuff that dreams were made of; but held it all as real, vivid, and substantial as the scene before him. Again he clasped Nathan to his bosom, and often kissing him, at last conscious of where he was, and less regretting the vanished vision in knowing that once more Trenk was with him. While Nathan was putting on his little shoes, the child remembered his coming into the room; but there his recollection ended, as he said, "Me is a good boy; not put muddy shoes on the carpet and chairs."

"Yes, Bob, you are a good boy; but who brought you up stairs?"

"Mamma brought me, and the ships with pony horse, to give me drum, and flowers, and pretty ladies."

"Upon my word, my boy, that is a new kind of navigation, with a select cargo."

"But where is the flag, and trees, and music?" asked the little fellow, still harping on his dream.

Nathan took him on his back and gave him a tune on the Kent bugle, which Bob enjoyed greatly as music on horseback, in fancy placing himself at the head of one of those immortal, invincible cavalry regiments of the city, the especial admiration of our boys, and the envy and terror of the Imperial and Coldstream Guards of Europe.

The afflicted cripple evinced her gratitude and affection for Nathan in her own peculiar way, and to her own satisfaction. She, too, would visit his rooms, with the assistance of the nurse, to sit for hours on a cushioned chair contemplating the beautiful objects with which the apartments were adorned. A simple rose or flower would be left in water to please his eye on his return, or an elaborately worked marker for his book; and if she had received any present, her gratification was but half complete till he had expressed his



admiration. On those happy evenings for the children when Nathan remained with them, he devised amusements for their especial delight. He played on the piano, and cremona, and other instruments, or he sang lively little ballads suitable for their understanding and adapted to their taste. When company was present, then the entertainment would vary, but always with some new charm for the excited children. Sabina sometimes lent his aid to interest them, although the little cripple had some instinctive dislike to him. But Bob would sit on his knee and watch the figures in the fantastic shadows on the wall, which Sabina made by various combinations. Different animals would be seen in outline, which would talk and imitate their counterparts of real life. Singing-birds would be heard outside the windows, dogs would bark under the table, and lambs would bleat behind sofas. The illusion was always perfect, and they were correspondingly pleased.

Emma Gray was often with the afflicted child Alice, for she was a Sunday-school scholar in Emma's class, whom she visited, not only from duty, but from pleasure, and also as an intimate acquaintance of Mrs. Russell. Emma had always a large assortment of entertaining little religious books for her favorites, with which she kept Alice supplied, and these the innocent little cripple always placed on Nathan's table, believing he would read them with delight. It was evident Emma enjoyed her visits, which she would prolong till late in the evening, romping with the little boy and amusing Alice, or in turn amused when Nathan or Sabina was there to join in the sport.

But Trenk was Emma's favorite. She always met him with a smile, and seemed entranced with his melody when she had prevailed on him to favor her with some choice plain-



tive airs. He, too, would teach her the new dancing-steps or quadrille figures, and when he was her escort they had leisure moments for some agreeable conversation. Emma was fluent, with a well cultivated mind, and, as she was a little lady, not much in society, had read some, and thought and felt more, her sentiments were vivid and original, with a rich freshness and candor not met with in others, making her highly attractive to Mr. Trenk. In this manner they were thrown together much more than could have happened had Nathan only seen her in his round of dissipation. He was conscious she was unhappy; that some secret grief brooded over her thoughts, throwing a cloud across her brow, where sunshine and happiness ought perpetually to dwell, if peace and contentment are ever bestowed on this earth to those who most richly deserve them. An orphan girl, without fortune, she had sought in the consolations of religion that balm for her soul and outpourings of her pure heart, when a mother's bosom on which to repose had been denied to her. Sincere and single-minded in her piety, she had found in it, in the virtues which it inculcates, a germ of happiness, the solace of many dreary, mournful hours, and that courage and fortitude to bear her weary cross until permitted to join her parents in another world. She had schooled herself against depression of spirits as sinful, and, in the desire to appear cheerful, she had often been surprised in society, when she had in reality found a momentary pleasure and enjoyment.

It can, therefore, be easily understood how it was that her first interview with Nathan had been at once so attractive and how his music and plaintive little song had so deeply affected her. On further acquaintance, they had become the best of friends, mutually pleased, and equally desirous of



meeting frequently. Whenever Nathan met her at entertainments, which, to be sure, was not often, he was most assiduous in his attentions, and, indeed, receiving from him many of those agreeable impressions which dispelled the gloom from her mind.

Whenever she was fortunate in meeting Mr. Burk with Nathan while visiting Mrs. Russell, Emma had an additional pleasure. This fat young gentleman always welcomed her presence, as it might be imagined he would have received a favorite younger sister. Kindness was in his language and in his deportment, indicative almost of affection, with such a genial warmth in his expression and sentiments that could not fail to impress her favorably. They must have been well known to each other from the pleasure with which they met; and the watchful solicitude he always evinced for the respect to be bestowed upon her, plainly indicated his interest in her welfare. Although no one would suppose that she should ever make Mr. Burk a confidant in her troubles, yet it was perceptible he understood her much better than others; leading many to the belief that all the incidents of her innocent life were well known to him. Some said they were relations; and when it was alluded to in his presence, he neither admitted nor denied the fact, but either evaded it playfully, or carelessly acknowledged a family resemblance, "something like that between Falstaff and his page."

In such casual meetings of friends as these above described at Mrs. Russell's, it can easily be imagined the pleasure all experienced, even while intent on amusing the children; and they who witnessed Nathan's deportment on these evenings could not for a moment suppose he was the desperate gamester, the dissolute character, for which the world gave him credit. No one could divine Sabina's thoughts on the



subject, for he seemed too selfish and too much absorbed in his favorite acoustic amusements to form an opinion in such matters. He might know something about ministers, or Sunday-schools, or sermons, but about men of the world or business affairs everybody was certain he was either innocent or indifferent. Mr. Burk was too indolent to trouble himself about Nathan's habits, content to follow the lead of other people. It was no matter at best to him if Trenk were saint or sinner. Emma Gray, probably, had never heard the reports at all, and therefore knew only her own feelings towards him.

Mrs. Russell never supposed, when Nathan promised Bob a pony, that her darling boy was to be entered on the track leading to perdition, under the training of one who was an adept in that kind of knowledge. Nor did she object when, in pleasant weather, Nathan ordered round his carriage for the children to be out in the fresh air enjoying delightful drives, although he could not accompany them.

---

## CHAPTER XVI.

THERE is a portion of the metropolis, often mentioned in newspapers and elsewhere, which is an unexplored region to that blessed part of the human family called the Upper Ten Thousand. It would be wholly unknown to them had it not been for the geographical ardor and enterprise of railroad directors, pushing their scientific inquiries into that desert, distant, dusty region, and opening it up as a transit route between the two oceans of life—between business down



town in the morning and the family bosom up town in the evening.

This tract of country, delineated on the island charts as the Bowery, is supposed by all people in the rural districts to be some immense edifice, combining the architectural embellishments of Bunker Hill, the Rip-Raps, the Mormon Temple, and Barnum's Museum. The best society was nearly as much mistaken until railroad companies enlightened it in their diffusion of useful knowledge.

The Bowery is the widest avenue of the city: an avenue more than a mile in length, running nearly parallel to Broadway, and not far distant to the east of that imposing street. The Bowery, however, is as well-paved and withall more spacious. At the upper end stands the immense brick and mortar structure, where several millions of dollars are annually collected to be invested in religious books, that are spread free and broadcast over the world for the promotion of Christianity. At the opposite, the lower and distant extremity of the same thoroughfare, the children of Judea, in less ambitious buildings, have made as lavish expenditure in second-hand clothing, of which, according to their own account, they are equally generous. Thus, between the two religions, between synagogue and church, Stuyvesant Place and Chatham Square, between the New Testament and old pantaloons, the Bowery lies like a Mediterranean of lager-bier, with a polyglot population, the German language, however, being in the ascendant, a sort of *Lingua Franca* of the locality.

The near approach of the rival religious dispensations in this quarter, has, no doubt, exercised a marked effect upon the prejudices of both. For here the Israelite forgets to keep his Sabbath, and his Christian neighbor, in returning



the compliment, is equally oblivious of his duties on the first day of the week. Hence the laws made for the observance of Sunday are scorned as fanatical edicts, unworthy of this enlightened age of civil and religious liberty. But it is due to candor to add that the Bible-House and buildings on Chatham Square are scrupulously closed on that day—out of respect to the public—in order that the people may enjoy themselves.

The denizens of the street, duly impressed with religious humility from the opposing creeds, have erected their humble houses without much pretension to height or ornament. Their style of buildings would be eminently suitable in the event of an earthquake, as the roofs are too near to the ground to fall outside of the curb-stones from the effects of a shock. But for all commercial purposes this order of architecture cannot, in strict justice, be classed under either the beautiful or beneficial. A reformation in this matter, however, is progressing. In the meanwhile, the low brick and frame structures are occupied as inferior-class stores and shops of all kinds, filled with corresponding wares, to be sold with more than Broadway profits.

Innovation in accordance with this enlightened age has made, however, but slow progress as yet, either towards modern masonry or modern morals in the upper end of this street. Here the American element, along with Puritan habits, still predominates. But the swelling tide of immigrants sends an intimidating note to leave before the foreign inundation is upon them.

Here, on one stormy winter night when snow and sleet were falling, when many of the shop windows were closed, when their lights were extinguished at quite an early hour, Morton Burk sat in an inner-room of a small, old, dingy



house. This low two-story building was constructed of inferior brick, presenting a sombre appearance on the outside, with its two narrow doors and one narrow window on the first floor, and two windows above. A small store or shop was in front, and the sitting-room adjoining, that Morton occupied, was fitted up with very plain but neat furniture. Beyond was another apartment of the same size, in the corner of which the stairs led to the upper story, and beyond this again was a small kitchen.

Mr. Burk was resting himself in silence and in an ample arm-chair before a good fire of anthracite coal, blazing cheerfully in the grate. He was smoking, and, as usual, with a glass of brandy in close proximity to his elbow. Opposite to him was a thin, shrivelled-up old man, with scanty, white locks, and in a much worn suit of black, but in good preservation and clean. He was snapping his eyelashes as he looked alternately at Morton and at another person who was seated upright on an old sofa, most uncomfortably, in the furthest corner of the room. This retiring gentleman seemed to be awaiting Burk's pleasure, expecting him to speak. He was a man in the prime of life, without any personal attractions, yet dressed with evident care, although not in the prevailing style or fashion. He was rather tall and slim, with thin features, sandy whiskers of a most formal cut, and complexion much whiter than indicative of good health. You might take him, at first sight, for a neighboring store-keeper attentive to business and well-to-do in the world.

Burk was in no haste to open the conversation, while the feeble old man, with evidently a feeble intellect, awaited impatiently for something to be said. At last Morton took a taste of brandy, and, without raising his head, asked:



“Major Waywode, what is the news down town?”

“Not much of anything,” replied he of the distant sofa.

“Was it snowing as you came up?”

“Yes, with a slight sprinkle of rain.” Then, after a moment’s pause, the Major added: “I think there will be some sleighing in Broadway to-morrow.”

Hereupon another long silence ensued, only broken by the noise of the storm outside, and the rattle of the various railroad cars passing in front of the house. Burk smoked on without further observation, until even he appeared to become weary of the monotony. Then, raising his voice to a high pitch, he exclaimed, as if intending to be heard in the shop:

“I think, Mary, you had better shut up and come in. I am tired waiting for you.”

Major Waywode at this volunteered in a timid voice to state that Mary would be in soon; that she was fixing some goods in their proper place. After another pause of some moments a movement was heard in the shop, and the sound of a bar put up, indicating that the lady in question might be expected. At the next instant the partition door opened, and she made her appearance.

The Major involuntarily rose to his feet, while Morton in haste snatched the pipe from his mouth as his eyes fell upon the beautiful girl before him. She was above medium height, with soft brown hair, large hazel eyes, and dazzling regular teeth. Her complexion and lips denoted high health in their roseate tints, while her mouth and other features of her face were such as a sculptor would wish for models. She had a very becoming dress of a thick winter pattern, well made, and fitting in perfection, but leaving enough of her neck and arms exposed to indicate the full development of



her well formed figure. The smile with which she welcomed the gentlemen was in itself bewitching, and the clear, ringing, merry tones of voice in which she spoke would have dispelled gloom from any heart. Frankness, decision, and benevolence equally beamed from her clear countenance. Nor could any one be mistaken in supposing she was a girl of rare good common sense. It was not what she said, but the manner in which she spoke, that made her irresistibly fascinating.

"Smoking again, Mr. Burk," said she, as Morton resumed his pipe.

"Yes, Mary; it is one of the few comforts left me in my down-hill of life."

"Poor fellow! As you have so few, what are the others?" said she, with a merry smile.

"My comforts are like the balls at the pawnbrokers, three in number: a glass of brandy, a pipe, and the little piece of dimity now before me."

"Thank you," said she, pouting, "for the compliment, putting me on a level with a bottle of liquor and a paper of tobacco."

"Well, then," said Morton, "ask your father there if he does not like smoking, and ask the Major if he does not as a true Virginian cultivate the weed. Mary, you must not undervalue the luxuries of life."

"If father wishes it, I have no objections," said she, slightly coughing from an inhalation of smoke; "but it will choke me some of these days."

"I never heard of any lady dying of it or else more pipes would be burning among some husbands of my acquaintance."

Mary, while laughing, coughed again and cleared her throat.



"Take a little of this goblet," said he; "'tis not so sweet as woman's lip, but much more comfortable in the long run."

With a wave of her hand, however, she smilingly declined the suggestion, and drank some water.

"But why don't you take a seat, Mary? Oh, I see now," looking down at her skirt in admiration. "That is a most beautiful spread, anyhow; new, and in the latest style."

"Yes, and with gaiters to match," said she, putting out the toe of her little foot for his contemplation.

"They are beautiful," he exclaimed; "and in your new high heels you are a peg above us this evening. But why did you pile on the attractions in such a night as this?"

"We were going to Niblo's, if it had not been for the snow-storm."

"Who is we?" Morton asked.

"The Major and myself."

Here the gallant officer modestly remarked that the snow was a very unfortunate event indeed.

"Never mind," said Burk, "we will try and make up for the loss. The old Nubian at the corner will soon be here with a tureen of smoking stewed oysters and trimmings."

The old gentleman at this information snapped his eyelashes more vigorously with evident satisfaction; and Mary, perceiving the pleasure this announcement gave her father, hastened into the adjoining apartment to arrange the preliminaries with an old housekeeper whom she called down stairs to her assistance.

The old man held both Burk and Major Waywode in high estimation as gentlemen of great wealth and distinction. When very young, and while a clerk in a country store, Mary's father had been seized with a military ardor, and as



the country was then at war with England, he was commissioned a lieutenant in a volunteer regiment, that marched into Canada. History does not inform us of his exploits in arms, although several of the name are honored in the bulletins, his name being Smith. When his regiment was disbanded, he turned his sword into a yard-stick, and now, instead of mounting barbed steeds, he only sprang over the counter. He had married, but his wife died after many years of a happy life, leaving Mary as the only surviving child. Misfortunes came upon him thick and fast. He failed in business and removed to the city, where prosperity did not return. Mary was employed in a store in Broadway when quite young, and in time earned a little money. When she was eighteen, her father required so much nursing that she could not leave him, and in order to make a support she commenced to sell a few articles at home on her own account. She had been successful, and now was in possession of a stock of goods in all the variety ever found in a trimming store. By close attention to business and punctuality, she had been enabled each year to enlarge her establishment, and even had a credit among the merchants from whom she purchased.

Mary was well known in the neighborhood, and equally popular with her customers. Her rare beauty of course attracted the youths, but she had not given them encouragement to visit. They told one another of their efforts and of their failures with the Rose-Bud, as they called her, all declaring she was the most beautiful and at the same time the most hard-hearted girl along the street, who was sure to make any fellow ridiculous; for, with her good-humored candor, she could keep them at a distance without offending. Her first acquaintance with Burk was accidental. He had



met two of his associates at the corner of Broadway and Canal street, where, halting for a moment to exchange salutations, they were attracted to a young girl plainly dressed, who wished in vain to cross Broadway while the street was running knee-deep in melting ice and snow-water. As she turned her head in despair, they observed her striking countenance of brilliant color. "I will go a pair of boots anyhow on that beauty," said Burk, and at the next instant he had thrown his sturdy arm around her waist, to carry her through the flood to the other side. Before she could recover from her surprise, he landed her safely. At first she was provoked at what seemed to be a rudeness in a fashionably dressed young gentleman; but he gracefully touched his hat and hoped she would pardon him, so that she could not in her heart resent it as an affront. As he turned away he added: "But if you really think I was wrong, I can make all right by carrying you back again." The merry twinkle of her eye confessed he was forgiven. When Mary returned home she related the adventure, declaring she did not know how she could ever have crossed Broadway had it not been for the politeness and kindness of the gentleman.

But Burk could not forget the bright eyes and blooming cheeks he had thus so strangely met with. He thought he had never seen such a striking beauty; and "gracious me! she was like a lump of lead. If we were," thought he, "to estimate beauty like the Mussulmans, by weight, I will back my snow-bird against anything of her inches." He did not suppose he would ever see her again, and with a sigh and some brandy gave up all hopes.

In a few days the pavements had become impassable for pedestrians. All sought in the evening for a railway car or omnibus coming up town, and Burk found his only chance



for a ride was in a car that ran on a line through the Bowery. Before he reached his destination, an accident on the road indicated at least a half-hour's delay. Burk thought he would find some solace in his pipe on the pavement. Wanting a light, he entered a store and asked for a match, while at the same time he was pressing down the tobacco. He lit his pipe with the light readily furnished to him, and as he was about to leave he turned to thank the person, when he met a pair of brilliant eyes levelled in a steady gaze upon him from the opposite side of a glass case containing fancy articles for sale. He returned the look, and as he remembered the Broadway adventure, he exclaimed: "Nothing pleases but railroad accidents; Shakspeare, thou reasonest well. Do you remember me, Miss?"

"I have to thank you for your politeness," she answered, with a most bewitching smile.

"Enough said among friends. My name is Morton Burk, and now tell me what is yours?" at the same time picking up one of her business cards, and reading "Smith." He looked up in her face, all suffused with blushes, as he added: "Smith! Smith! I think I have heard of a Smith before, and his name was John. However, here is my pasteboard," handing her his card, "in exchange for yours."

He politely bade her good evening, muttering to himself. "Henceforth no pent-up Utica shall contract my benevolence, for I shall love the boundless universe, the universe of Smiths."



## CHAPTER XVII.

MAJOR WAYWODE is worthy of a chapter to himself. Major Waywode of Virginia is a celebrity in New York. Not to know Major F. F. V. Waywode of Virginia, is to argue yourself a nobody. Major F. F. V. Waywode of Virginia, now at the Astor, is a great man. His elevation in society is mainly due to merit alone, and to the strangest of all merit—to his modesty. Not modest assurance, another name only for impudence, whatever the Spectator may have published to the contrary. The Major's great virtue and talent were modesty, diffidence, deference to others, and ever yielding to his friends.

The exact date in the chronological order of important events when the Major made his first appearance on the stage of public life at this far-famed hotel is unknown. Obscurity seems to hang around the origin of all greatness, as it has ever been observed by a sage in Brooklyn, that the darkest hour precedes the dawn. But the Major's name was a few years before duly recorded in that register containing the autographs of all our great men. With his inexorable modesty, he only announced himself as Mr. Waywode. The next day a servant, insinuating some disparaging remark about his antecedents, was immediately dismissed from the establishment.

One of the gentlemanly clerks in the office, however, who at the time was meditating a universal biography of all the guests ever stopping at the Astor, was struck with the remark of the discarded servant. He immediately instituted quietly a series of personal researches in the neighborhood of Hudson street, which were crowned with the most happy results



in complete success. Mr. Waywode was in humble circumstances and a cordwainer, an artist in ladies' gaiters. He was unmarried, and unblessed with those social comforts which keep away gloom and the blues; and being desirous of not only seeing the world but also of rising in it, he resolved to take boarding for a few weeks at the Astor. His finances justified the experiment, and in the meantime he reserved his more homely lodgings, which saved that item of expense. Mr. Waywode was pleased with the trial, and at the expiration of two weeks, when the special appropriation was about covered, he promptly paid his bill to resume his professional labors in the service of the ladies.

The polite and ever attentive clerk in the office with the biographical turn of mind, noticed that Mr. Waywode was in proper trim, quiet, retiring, and, above all, extremely modest. He never addressed any of the guests unless first accosted, and, by his unobtrusive manners, the few with whom he entered into conversation thought him a very well informed gentleman, especially as he always assented to every opinion expressed—the best way in the world to obtain a rapid reputation for sense and intelligence.

On his next visit his name was entered in the register as Major Waywode, by the same ever watchful clerk. Fortunately, the same evening, one of the local reporters for the press stepped in to notice those who had come, and insisted on the clerk giving him a small list of distinguished arrivals for the morning papers. In due time, therefore, appeared in the appropriate column among the celebrated notables stopping at the hotels, the name of Major Waywode of Virginia. Two or three of the young men in the office, being sworn to secresy, were informed how it occurred. Waywode's next advent was known to the world by the publication that



“Major F. F. V. Waywode of Virginia has taken rooms at the Astor House.”

Now it is true in the register certain hieroglyphics were set opposite to his name, indicating him as the luxurious occupant of one of the most sumptuous suites in the house. But the fact was, the rooms were engaged by a party expected daily, and to keep them vacant this plan was adopted by the ever enterprising clerks, to appease some importunate guests just arrived who demanded them as unoccupied.

By this time the Major's person was familiar to many, and his acquaintance extended without any overtures on his part. He received cards of invitation to the openings of railroads, to trial-trips of steamers, to witness the operations of some new and valuable inventions, to literary and scientific celebrations; and at one of these the papers, by a wrong collocation of names, made him appear as distributing diplomas in a Greek salutatory. The professor, however, who was thus unintentionally deprived of his due honors in the performance, addressed an explanatory note to the editors, correcting the mistake of the types: but in his extreme caution lest he should give offence to the unseen Major, he complimented his “well known distinguished talents and erudition” in such handsome phrases, that two or three ambitious colleges were on the eve of inviting the learned Waywode to “adorn” a chair in the dead languages.

It must not, however, be supposed the Major could find time to attend the cricket matches, the target firings, the Union Course trainings, the receptions of bearded and belligerent exiles, the callings upon guests of the city, inspections of rifled cannon and sixty-five revolvers, the private exhibitions of paintings, and a thousand other patriotic duties, but



all of which were published with his name figuring as one of those present. When the public were mourning his retirement to his estates in the South, slight notices occasionally appeared of his being nominated to Congress; of his coal mines flooded in the last terrible freshet; of valuable gold deposits discovered on his property; or of his intention to sell out his plantations and slaves preparatory to a permanent residence in a beautiful villa on the Sound.

One or two of the local reporters at last discovered the source from whence emanated such intimate knowledge of the Major's actions and opinions. But in their hands the secret was safe and valuable; for it often happens in their business that names are wanted to fill up certain gaps which may occur by inadvertence with those from whom they receive their information. The Major consequently appeared at all the indignation and mass meetings as a vice-president, secretary, or in some other public capacity. He witnessed a great many accidents on Broadway, and was once killed—it could not be helped—in a railroad smash-up in New Jersey. But next day he was restored to life by the assistance of a telegraphic dispatch. He was also the “unknown” author of various political, or literary, or scientific papers, and had written an able document advocating the opening of the African Slave Trade, demonstrating that the Congo negroes were better than Virginia blacks, and Virginia blacks were preferable to all the white “operatives” in the North.

His acquaintance with the Rose-Bud had been formed when on a trial trip of an ocean steamer. Two steamboats had an accidental collision in the Narrows, on one of which was Mary, with a large party who were on an excursion round Staten Island. The steamboat with Mary was about sinking, when the steamer on which was Waywode came to



their relief, taking the whole company on board. Major Waywode was particularly active as a wrecker; and as the invited guests had each been presented at starting with a bouquet, and decorated with a white or red rosette, with ribbon pendant, their personal appearance was decidedly festive. Major Waywode showed himself every inch a sailor; at least the papers asserted it next day. Major Waywode was particularly attentive to the ladies. But in justice to the other old salts, some of the "highly respectable" of the city, they were equally devoted to the pretty ones, although for family reasons they especially requested the special reporter not to make a note of it. The Major was soon in the good graces of Mary and her old father. He took them under his kind protection, showing them all parts of the noble vessel, escorting them most gallantly to the dining saloon, and having all the delicacies, which were in profusion, served up to them, with flowing goblets of champagne. The old man snapped his eyelashes, but requested the Major not to put himself to such trouble and expense; for the veteran volunteer imagined the Major to be at least the principal owner in the steamer, and very prodigal in his entertainment. When they landed, Waywode would not quit their side until he had seen them safely home, where he bestowed the bouquet and rosette on the Rose-Bud as mementoes of the pleasant excursion.

The special reporter furnished the papers with a graphic and thrilling account of the collision and disaster. He introduced the ocean steamer most appropriately rushing to the rescue, like an eagle on rapid pinion, and was thus enabled most artistically to throw in a decorative puff for ulterior financial purposes, at the prompting of the owner. Major Waywode figured in the double character of a daring corsair



in action, and as a soft, seductive Lothario when the dangers were passed.

The newspapers were in great demand next morning all along the Bowery. The excitement was up to the highest point of interest. The price of peanuts fell in proportion at the theatre and other classic institutions in that street, the sure barometer of the public mind being deeply agitated. The enterprising manager of the Bowery Olympic forthwith announced the play of the Wrecker's Daughter for the ensuing evening, "when Major Waywode of Virginia and other distinguished commanders will be present by especial invitation."

Morton Burk was much pleased with the glowing accounts he received from Mary and from reading the newspapers of the Major's gallantry. He was, moreover, inclined to call on him at the Astor. As usual, he dropped in to the hotel to get his daily glass of good brandy, for which the house is famous; and having lounged into the office, he inquired carelessly of our friend the clerk, with whom he was well acquainted, if Major Waywode was in his rooms. A knowing twinkle was in the clerk's eye as he stuck a pen behind his ear, while he jerked at the bell-handle and said he would inquire. This twinkle induced Morton to pause and to tell him not to trouble himself. Soon after Burk was initiated into the secret.

For a young, idle gentleman like Morton, who was wanting excitement and willing to be pleased with any novelty, this biographical sketch of the Major was highly interesting. He was now anxious to form his acquaintance, but which he intended should not be commenced with a formal introduction. The Major was undoubtedly a character, and Burk was fond of all originals. He did not enlighten Mary as to



his knowledge, nor would she have known the professional occupation of the Major, had he not himself, from a sense of honor, informed her of his trade. He became a constant and welcome visitor in the Bowery, and was the escort of the Rose-Bud frequently to the theatres or other places of public attraction. Burk was always willing to supply tickets for these amusements, and contributed them in such a manner as not to offend the delicacy of the Major, if he were influenced by such scruples, which may, however, be doubted. Morton himself not unfrequently had been seen with Mary at Niblo's, and even in the parquette of the opera, where her pretty, innocent face and becoming dress made her the especial mark of notice and admiration. But when the Rose-Bud discovered that these amusements, long drawn out, were not inviting to Morton, she was inclined to forego the pleasure, as she never thought of self. But the Major was at hand to supply the place of Morton, and she willingly accepted his company, for he was delighted to be with her at these exhibitions, or wherever she might wish to go.

Morton had informed Walter and Nathan of the singular ambition of the Major, with his success in notoriety and distinguished acquaintances. Although they never had heard of him, nor noticed the complimentary paragraphs in the papers, so remote was their circle of society from his associations, yet from Burk's animated account of his life and adventures, they became interested in his history. They had both been introduced to Mary by Burk at a promenade concert. Sabina, also, had thus been made acquainted with her, and occasionally Morton took them separately to call on her, at her home, in his frequent visits to the Bowery. It was quite natural that he should wish to exhibit her beauty and other rare merits to his young friends, for he was proud of



the superior attractions of the Rose-Bud. He was also anxious to please and amuse her, and what could be more appropriate than the society of three of the most amusing or pleasing gentlemen, each of whom had become celebrated in the most refined and exclusive circles for some distinguished talents. Through the kindness of Burk, Major Waywode had been introduced to these fashionable gentlemen, when he was fortunate to meet them at the trimming store. The Major was fully sensible of the honor of the acquaintance, and his modesty increased in due proportion to his elation of spirit.

The happiest moment of the gallant Waywode's life may be said to have culminated when he would find himself with Mary leaning on his arm as they were leaving the opera. Then they were sure to be delayed in the brilliant corridor, in the crowd of beauties of fashion and of splendor, the most celebrated in the city. To observe the respectful admiring gaze of the handsome dressed gentlemen, and the straining eyes of the fascinating ladies looking in wondering inquiry on the lovely creature whom they did not know; then to notice with delight the graceful salutations of Burk and Walter, of Sabina and Trenk, as each raised his gloved hand to uncover as she tripped along; can it be doubted her sweet smile was bewitching as she returned gratefully these complimentary recognitions? How much the Rose-Bud she appeared to the full-blown and faded flowers in elegant toilet around her! They would have given all their diamonds and pearls for her pretty face, for her sweet lips, for her blooming cheek and beaming eye. The ladies never looked at Waywode; all their admiration was for the decided beauty clinging to his arm. It was no matter if he were not full and fashionably dressed. Did not all the gentlemen say



he was from Virginia? and any solecism of dress in him was therefore excusable; being only a southern latitude, not within the prohibited degrees north which forbid such a sin against the canons of good taste.

---

## CHAPTER XVIII.

IN a preceding chapter Mary's father was left waiting in pleasing anticipation of the oysters Morton Burk had ordered. The snow was falling fast against the windows; the wind was blowing with violence, indicative of one of those cold winter storms disastrous to shipping and distressing to the poor. Mary had taken a seat on the sofa to talk to the Major, when a loud rap was heard at the front door.

"Who can that be," she remarked, "out in such a night as this? It must be one in great want of something."

"Let them wait till morning," exclaimed Morton.

"Surely when they come in such a storm," said Mary, "some urgent haste must be the cause. Poor soul! I will go and see."

When she took down the bar, a man well muffled up, white with snow, entered, closing the door behind him. "What a night it is!" he muttered, making his way to the inner room, where he commenced throwing off his wrappings. As he slowly removed the thick shawl, Mr. Sabina stood revealed.

"Just in the nick of time, Don Nicolas," said Burk, shaking hands with him. "It is kind in you," Mary added, "to visit us in such a night. How did you get here?"

"The snow is deep," Sabina answered, "still the cars are



running. But where are Parker and Trenk?" looking round in surprise.

"Did you expect to meet them here?"

"Yes, Miss Mary. I left them only a few minutes ago, and they said they were coming."

"That would be delightful," she cried; "if they only would come, then you would all be here at once."

At that instant a loud knock was given against the outer door, when Mary exclaiming: "I suppose I must see to them," hastened again to the entrance. They, however, remained in the store to remove their cloaks, with other thick protections, before making their appearance. On entering, it was perceived they were in full evening costume.

"Miss Mary, we have come to comfort you in this snow-storm," said Walter, seizing her hand. "And you must know we have always some pleasure in anticipation when we go abroad in such weather."

"Thank you, Mr. Parker; if the storm brought you, I am sure I do not regret the snow falling."

"Very prettily expressed, Miss Mary. What have you to say to me?" asked Nathan, as he took her hand.

"I have the same for you," she replied, blushing deeply. "I hope I may often see both, even without the storm."

The gentlemen exchanged salutations with the old man and Major Waywode before being seated.

"Where were you bound for this evening," Burk inquired, "if the snow had not fallen so fast and furious?"

"First we were going," said Walter, "to Mrs. Laura's; next to a neighbor of hers, I forget the name, in the block below; then to the Bachelors' Ball at the Stuyvesant."

"And you have given up all for us?" exclaimed Mary, with a grateful, fascinating smile.



"Yes, Miss Mary, the storm decided us. We knew we would find you at home ; an unwonted pleasure, greater than balls or parties."

"But suppose," said Burk, "you had been caught in a snow-drift, and compelled to remain in the railroad car all night?"

"I was afraid of that as we came along ; but I fortified myself against such a calamity by making beautiful moral reflections," answered Walter, with great gravity.

"With making horrible puns," Nathan remarked.

"What were they?" Burk asked. "I can survive them, as I have a toothache. Let me not burst in ignorance here within bow-shot of a Cooper Institute."

"His first exclamation was," said Nathan, "when he thought we would be buried in the drift, 'This is the life of a recluse, of a Carthusian, a sort of Don Car-los the Fifth existence, to be thus in-car-c-rated.'"

"Spare me, spare me," sighed Burk ; "I would prefer the raging tooth. Did the accommodating driver call in the no less vigilant police ? or did he propose to contract with Mr. Parker to sprinkle Attic salt along the rails for snow-melting purposes?"

"It is all a mistake," interposed Walter, with much solemnity, "it is all a mistake. I was speaking of an avalanche and the monks of St. Bernard, with their snow-dogs."

"It is true he spoke of dogs," said Nathan, "for he asked me if I had ever heard of the lines on a Newfoundland."

"Oh, do not, Mr. Trenk, repeat them," implored Burk.

"It was not poetry, but something about an animal being run over by cars in the avenue."



"I appeal to you, Miss Mary, if this is fair," cried Walter, turning to her, who he observed was pleased with the conversation. "Is this fair, to have all my wit spoiled by an envious description of it, and a no less malicious spirit with which it is received?"

"I do not think these gentlemen good judges," said she.

"Thank you, thank you, fair lady. Nathan may know something of a song, and Morton something of a smoke-pipe or supper, but ladies only are capable of appreciating my conversation."

"Speaking of suppers," said Burk, "reminds me of oysters, and here they come," as he heard the rattle of dishes in the adjoining room.

The arrival of the additional company delayed the old negro man in preparing his entertainment, which was now announced. Walter escorted Miss Mary to the head of the table, while Nathan took a seat at her side, and the other gentlemen found chairs farther from her. The Nubian, as Burk called him, knew well how to provide on these occasions. Not only were the articles cooked to perfection, but the glass and plate requisite for a handsome display were forthcoming by him also. The room was cheerful, well lighted, while the table was resplendent with decorations, china, and silver. The Nubian was the great man for festivities in those regions, and knew his business. His punch was also hot, well brewed; the champagne excellent. It was a great gratification to Mary to observe the attention bestowed on her old father by the gentlemen, who were careful in assisting him to all that might be tempting, and to keep his glass filled with punch, which he preferred to wine.

They had many pretty things to say to her—well turned compliments, with little attentions which their constant



intercourse with refined and polished society made both graceful and natural. They had also a full flow of spirits to render the general conversation entertaining and amusing. The veteran snapped his gray eyelashes in great satisfaction, seeing himself thus surrounded with this splendor, in company with such distinguished guests. The Major sat in modest wonder, in self-congratulation at his great altitude in the social scale above Hudson street. Sabina seemed content to cast furtive side-glances at the beautiful girl at the head of the table, without any wish on his part to be noticed by the other gentlemen.

But when the dishes were removed a general desire was expressed for Nathan to contribute a song or some other music for their entertainment. Burk had made a present to Mary of a piano, plain, to be sure, but yet excellent in its tone, that he designed for her amusement at times like this. His own guitar and cremona had also been sent on a former occasion when Nathan was expected. He readily complied with the wish, and sang a few pieces from "Lalla Rookh" with a grace and feeling which would have done credit even to their author.

"How fond Nathan is of love songs," Walter remarked. "One would suppose him to be an inflammable mortal; but let me assure you, Miss Mary, he knows nothing of the 'tender passion.'"

"I would rather have the assurance of ladies, who perhaps know more on the subject," she replied.

"You cannot expect him to make love," said Morton. "He is like Bob Acres, who bought it ready-made."

"It was not love," said Walter, "that taught him song, nor song that taught him love."

"A misquotation," Morton exclaimed; "and probably un-



true. You may remember, Mary, the flat transgression of a schoolboy who, o'erjoyed in finding a bird's nest, showed it to his companions, and had to put up with the consequences."

"Alas!" said Walter, "he has never told his love what he thinks of her, but lets concealment, like the worm in the rose-wood, feed upon her damask curtains."

"The Niagara cataract of true love," added Morton, "never did run smooth. You are in suspension like the bridge at that abyss, where you must look out for rocks."

"Yes, a pocket-full of rocks," said Parker.

Nathan touched the notes of the new song, then popular with the Babes, and, addressing the Rose-Bud, asked her if she had heard this mournful ballad. "Don't listen to it, Miss Mary," cried Walter. "It is a slander on the sex, only sung by old bachelors like Nathan and these other disappointed misanthropes."

Mary and the gentlemen, however, demanded the song. As it required three or more voices, they all volunteered their services. "Let Sabina take the soprano; I will try the basso," said Morton. "You, Walter, lead in the forlorn hope, while Nathan will draw out his 'tenor reserves,' " at the same time seizing and tuning his cremona.

"Ordered like a field-marshal going into action," cried Walter; "and if you come out victorious, I will create you a Duke—Duke of Monongahela."

"Let it be old, Walter, old," Morton implored; "of the last century, of the Bourbon aroma—an aroma you never forget, nor wish to learn any other."

"I am afraid," said Nathan, "that spirit has often proved fatal to American chivalry."

"True," answered Walter, "many a gallant officer has



succumbed to its prowess. But can the Field-Marshal, our new Duke, tell us who was the first hero who fell at the bung-hole embrac-ure?"

"I suppose," said the Duke, "General Braddock was the man who took the original unfortunate pull at the Monongahela."

"Good! good!" exclaimed Walter, in mock admiration. "The Ethiopian minstrels would relish such wit. Strike up, Nathan, like the same sable troubadours immediately after their flashes of genius, and let us have the song or I shall choke with envy." Whereupon the music began.

Sabina surpassed all expectations in his share of the performance. He gave pantomime, and mimicry, and caricature in perfection as accompaniments to his peculiar voice. Not only did Mary laugh, but the others were almost incapable of executing their part from the interest they took in his antics. Thus encouraged, he continued his exhibitions after the music ceased, giving many more of these wonderful imitations which formerly astonished Trenk. Mary gazed in surprise and admiration at this strange creature, who seemed capable of reproducing sounds, however singular or grotesque. He finished at last from sheer exhaustion.

It required persuasion and importuning by Nathan and Burk to induce Walter to try any novelty for further entertainment. But Trenk commenced a tune on the piano, and urged Parker to go on with the words to which it was adapted. With much coaxing, Walter began one of those improvised recitations in verse—a talent quite common in Tuscany, but rare among our countrymen. Keeping time to the music, he sung or chanted the following, with its various allusions to the persons present and to passing events:



THE sleet and snow fall fast, fall deep to-night,  
But what cares the Duke, with his locks so white;  
    He sits by the blaze, and he smokes away,  
    Happy as cricket in the month of May,  
    Or young Buttons, up town, with bells and sleigh,  
    And fifteen-hundred-dollar bob-tailed bay.  
Then well may he smoke, regardless of snows,  
For has he not friends wherever he goes?  
Wherever he goes, at his beck and call,  
And perhaps a soft eye on him may fall.  
    Color your beard, whispers kindly each tongue,  
    Remembering well the old poets have sung,  
    "Those whom the gods and the girls love, dye young."  
He loves a love-song, to drive dull care,  
With good wishes to all, and some to spare,  
    For counsellor-sage, who learn'd in the laws,  
    When fun's going on ever tries to show cause;  
    For the mimic, too, who gains our applause,  
    Who talks with his limbs instead of his jaws.  
And the gifted fair youth, with golden voice,  
Whose light Peri notes make mortals rejoice;  
And the soldier brave, from the clime of the South,  
Seeking the bubble in the cannon's mouth;  
And warrior old, at last finding rest,  
In the arms of his child whom he loves best.  
But what can we sing of the Rose-Bud bright?  
Sylph-like in grace, a sweet angel of light!  
'Tis magic to look on her hazel eye—  
Madness to love her, to hope, and to sigh.  
    Not to be won like the maiden forlorn,  
    With music on harp or trumpet or horn,  
    Tho' breathed in her ear till the dawn of morn.  
But the Duke holds carouse! His health we crave;  
Long life to the Duke,—long, long may he wave.



Once more with a tiger—hurrah! hip! hip!  
 Most free from the heart, most loud from the lip.  
 The tiger again; and give it once more  
 Deeper and louder than given before:  
 Long life to the Duke, and long may he wave,  
 The last cheer we give, 'twas the first we gave.

Now bring us more punch, you old man of jet,—  
 Won in a raffle or lost in a bet;  
 'Tis no matter which—we live by your sweat;  
 Not left in Eden, with a garden to let,  
 When Adam at Eve went off in a pet.  
 They stole you from home, thou old man of wool,  
 Stretching God's law as they gave the long pull,  
 Which shipp'd you a slave and sold to John Bull,  
 Who once of such ebony had his hands full.

Old man of wool! Not to eat you, old man,  
 Did they rob you from wife, children, and clan;  
 But to shear your hide of humanity's fleece,  
 The toil of your hands in a lifelong lease.  
 Thou two-legged mutton, done pretty brown,  
 When sold for down South, the richest Southdown.  
 Famous and free as fair Athens of yore,  
 Her prestige high be it thine to restore,  
 For thou art proud grease, living grease, once more.

Then squeeze strong the lemon, mix well the wine,  
 Spurs to the stupid is tasting the vine.

We drink not in secret, we drink not alone,  
 We quaff from goblets fit for a throne,  
 To the lively drone of sweet Mellowtone,  
 Or the volcanic tale of old Brimstone.

Bring forth the bivalves, and let them be brought,  
 Like Mazeppa on horseback, naked and hot,  
 Dress'd *naturel*, as they sent him to pot,



In a very great stew to Tartary Crim ;  
 A crim. con. tartar emetic for him,  
 Dos'd, dòn-a-dòs on the outside of quod,  
 A quad-ru-ped-anti-stop him roughshod.

Let them be roasted or broiled if you wish,  
 Serve them up soon in well seasoned dish ;  
 'Tis too much honor for this dull oyster,  
 Thou maritime monk in sea-mud cloister.

Always at home, shut up in your shell,  
 A hermit in habits in your damp cell,  
 With cellery odor—a celestial smell.

Thou bearded friar of an order gray,  
 Which is an order to fry without pay ;

On no visiting terms with fur, feather, or fin,  
 No gossip's rich tale of saints, or of sin,  
 No open mouth save to take somebody in,

That can be done with a swallow and snap,  
 Without a palaver, you silent La Trappe,  
 Living alone, with whims the most selfish,  
 A stupid and blind, deaf and dumb shell-fish,  
 With no ear for music, a tuneless thing,  
 You'd swallow salt water sooner than sing.

No family ties, with no pride of kin,  
 No blood-relation to the terrapin ;  
 Forty-second cousin, like " whiskey-skin,"  
 To the mysteries, of Udolpho gin,  
 The berry'd body in Biningers bin :

Which cold-water mortals yet recommend,  
 To antique maiden and to broad-brim Friend ;  
 For fits of the blues—very blue to make  
 Those who cut conscience for the stomach's sake ;  
 Giving them strength human sins to deplore,  
 That bring too often this Wolf to the door.



If you were a nun at peace in your bed,  
 Trusting to luck to be now and then fed  
 By spoon-bill duck, nothing more need be said.  
 When the moon's gone down, when the stars have fled,  
 When winds whisper low, and the beacon's ahead;  
 When the waves are still as sea of the dead,  
 Beware the fiend who on mischief has sped;  
 Beware of his spell as he heaves the lead  
 For pirate to find your Chesapeake bed,  
 Whereon you sleep cool as if twelve months wed;  
     For the sign is made, and the charm is laid,  
 And chance of escape "not worth the first red."

But if from Blue Point with a sea-weed veil,  
 A strong-minded vestal from head to tail,  
 You come a Blu-mer-maid in coat of male,  
 Never minding your skirts in snow, slush, or hail;  
     Fresh, juicy, and sweet, the pick of the Point,  
     Not bothered with arms, legs,—or nose out of joint,  
 We'll bless you and dress you from tip to toe,  
 Not a bit of your neck or mole will show,  
 In salt and pepper cap, with mustard bow,  
 And Newark cider for Cologne de eau.

    Manhattan you'll call an isle of the bless'd,  
     Wandering in bliss superbly dress'd;  
     With fixings all new—the richest and best—  
     Which for weeks and months have given no rest  
     To the rest of mankind and Demorest.

If in for a spree, shells and vows you break,  
 Not dreading the embrace of dredging rake,  
 What sputter, we can't utter, you will make  
 To be hauled over coals, near to a steak!

    Old Downing loves well, an *auto de fê*,  
     Of young virgin victims from Oyster Bay.



But you're not one of the sex called divine,  
 No doubt from wearing the pure crinoline,  
 Which saints long ago brought into fashion,  
 To wean their thoughts from all earthly passion,  
     With a rude, rough hair-shirt up to the chin,  
     A soul-preserver in a flood of sin,  
     The first patent out for chemise of crin.

Mankind is your foe, mud monk crustaceous,  
 For you're in sooth a sinner ungracious,  
 But neither pugnosed nor yet pugnacious.  
 'Tis very well known why you keep to yourself,  
 Not that you are old and laid on the shelf,  
 Not lost an election, wager, or debt,  
 Your senses, teaspoons, or a silver set;  
     Not that you suffer from bank or heart break,  
     Hard bargain, hat lost, tight boot, or toothache,  
     Burk's puns, bosom friends, pants burst—an earthquake—  
     Pot-luck, kettle-drum, and tin-pan clam-bake,  
     Or Joe Miller torture, worse than the stake.

Yet for all that you're a hard-shell sinner,  
 Come tell us the way, how did you win her?  
 You will not deny a toothless old churl  
 You keep in your house, the mother of pearl.  
     Fair, smooth, and firm is her resplendent skin,  
     Was it only for this you took her in?  
     Not a hand will she lift, not even to spin,  
     Not even street yarn, delightful as sin.

She don't care for a hole in your stocking,  
 To roll up her eyes to scream "how shocking!"  
 No matter how cold all over you feel,  
 With poverty, too, you may be down in the heel.

We lay up in woollen our cash, you know,  
 When tide in affairs is at its flow;



But if cometh bad luck with an ebb quite low,  
Stock in stocking we seek for coin to show  
To the last dime down in the heel or toe.

Without gold, all's up, life a mere *fi'sco*,  
Better go under for our sad mis-go,  
To grim Treasury Sub—or to Cisco.

You keep her for taste, you keep her for pleasure,  
Is that the best plea as an "art treasure?"  
All feminines, truly, are treasures of art,  
We've long learned that strain, we know it by heart.  
Treasure of art! of pride, and pretence,  
"Don't be foolish, love, don't mind the expense,"  
Without Centrals, contracts, dollars, or sense.

Mother of pearl's an old nymph of the sea,  
Perhaps she warbled the same to Ulyssé,  
Who, fearing a wreck from that lyric blast,  
Tied himself up with tarred rope to a mast;  
'Twas thus he gave them the tar on rope's end,  
At courageous safe distance not to offend.

Nobody now uses tar on rope's strand,  
As a family syrup soothing and bland,  
But tight up we'll be if thus we expand.

Look to it, salt-fed! what are you about,  
Old mother pearl soon will have you shell out.

But why not speak truth, deal frank, and act fair?  
Why not, thou round one, come out on the square?

'Tis weak as wet rag, a leaky excuse,  
An old umbrella in a storm of abuse,

When you say it is done to defend her,  
Protesting yourself no young pretender,  
Never meant to be a double intender.

A Blue Pointer she that never is lame,  
Put her into the field, try her at game,



To point a moral or pile of brush,  
 You'll see neither cheek nor covey to flush.  
 And blue she may be, surrounded with Blues,  
 And good she can be as Goody-Two-Shoes;  
 Moral she must be as Madame Grundy,  
 Keeping at home both preaching and Monday.  
 But, set up at a sale, what would she bring?  
 With copperish taste, not worth a brass ring;  
 Too thin in her shell, too far from her prime,  
 Too scant for this market—dear at a dime.

Now listen amazed, with wide open mouth,  
 For gone she is to the land of the South,  
 In her new tongue, *tierra del Sud*,  
 For ever to quit her dear native mud;

Gone to the clime of the citron and vine,

With myrtle and rose, to need no more twine

For bouquets, from Mason and Dixon's Line.

She's gone from us now, gone over the sea,  
 Leaving behind her common pedigree.

Fresh does she wear the prefix of a De,  
*De-perlas* among aristocracy.

De she must have to mix well with ton,

M P. is preferred by the British Don,

A handle snobbish and soiled like the Hon.,

Which for honest is a *sequitur non*.

Honi Soit is the chap 'tis best to employ,  
 The pure Choctaw for a "broth of a boy."

Flat is Doctor, Professor, LL.D.,

Or the once rich, chivalrous F.F.V.,

And college fellow who wins an A.B.,

Like coroner's stamp on a *felo de se*.

In fact some large letter from A to T,

Or from T to breakfast, with black Bohéa,



As well will suit, for they are all sooty.  
 There is her friend, the Señor De Famer,  
 The great hated and petted girl tamer,  
 If she chafe at the bit or kick over trace,  
 When hitched in harness too tight for her pace.

There's her beau dapper, the little De Ficit,  
 Who once had a strange flirtation illicit,  
 How did the papers happen to miss it?  
 They treated him grosser with green-eyed will,  
 Because it was with the green grocer's till.

She received a bow from the grand De Faulter,  
 What could do more among friends to exalt her?  
 The cut of his jib, too square for palter,  
 Law's fiction fixed to gibbet and halter,  
 Rocked by winds on the rocks of Gibraltar.

Concha De Perlas, in full, has grown fat,  
 From size of a cup to crown of a hat;  
 But give her some skirts, some flounces, and fuss,  
 She'd take up one side of an omnibus.  
 With ease, too, she learns the soft Castilian,  
 From isle of Cuba to the last Chilean.

In colors to rival the bird flamingo,  
 She flirts in the wave hearing fine lingo  
 From the thickest of lips at San Domingo,  
 For darkest of darkies is the Duke Bygingo.

A tropical Lara is this Tycoon,  
 With dip too deep for octoroon;  
 Not pale is he in the beam of the moon,  
 But cold as marble at summer's noon.

Madly in love, like the Moor Othello,  
 He moored his bell-boat at Porto Bello,  
 For a belle amour, this same black fellow,



Now with bell for belle is bellig'rent dive,  
If resolved to have her dead or alive.

'Tis trespass to cruise in the shark's domain,  
Which he resents till the wounded and slain  
Are seen to float on the surface again.

A corpse is Bygingo towed on breakers,  
With the undertow for undertakers.  
This ravenous fish, claiming freebooter's fee,  
Is never at fault, though always at sea.  
He watches the "banks," their "keys" and "bars,"  
And paid is his toll near the isle of cigars.

He tends to the wrecks which storms engender  
He tends to a boat if they try to mend her,  
But at his own banks no legal tender.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

The Duke is asleep, and so is the Don,  
The Major is silent, pretty far gone ;  
But thou, charming dear child, smile on us yet,  
Smile sweetly, fond one, till the stars have set.

When the hours grow short, when the lights grow dim,  
Fill high the goblet to the melting brim,  
We sing at St. Rose-Bud's our morning hymn

To Mary.

Sleep, sleep, gentle maid, in happiness sleep,  
And be not afraid, our vigils we keep :  
Dream, dream, lovely child, in fancy free dream,  
With a spirit mild as the moon's pale beam :  
Lisp, lisp, too, our name in thy innocent breast  
To fan a soft flame, and we, too, are blessed :



And smile, smile once more with love's ruby lip,  
Which mortals adore, where the bee might sip;  
Break, break not the spell entrancing our heart,  
We bid thee farewell, in silence depart.

Here cease we to sing, this strain give o'er,  
We shut up our voices to open the door.  
Dear Morton, wake! you're no beauty sleeping;  
A drop in your eye! have you been weeping?

Tender heart throbbing with too much feeling;  
Drooping orbs sobbing, their secrets revealing;  
Around the punch-bowl tendril arm stealing;  
Take it to thy soul, worship it kneeling.

No further delaying near dawn of day,  
We hear a voice saying, "Come, come, oh pray,  
Now light your Dutch pipe and come, come away.'

Farewell to these joys, away they must pass,  
Like foam on the wine, like frost on yon glass;  
Like smile on the lip, or childhood's first tear,  
Like stars in the morn, like mist on the mere.  
But mem'ry will often return to this scene,  
To dwell with pleasure on what here has been.  
Farewell to them, then; we part in delight,  
To dream of our friends of this happy night.

Mary never had heard an impromptu recitation. She did not even know the talent for such an exhibition existed. Her amusement was consequently great when perceiving the sentiments elicited by transpiring events. Her attention became at once fixed on Walter, while her artless, expressive countenance betrayed every emotion of her heart. Smiles, blushes, and tears suffused her fair cheeks in rapid succession, as the verse awoke light or deep thoughts in her simple mind. Her merry laugh at the martial ambition of the



Major ended in a silent sob and tear for the tender expression to her aged parent; but her face was crimson at the sound of the trumpet and horn. The very monotony of the music, seemingly an endless repetition of a few bars, added to the novelty, until, bewildered, her hair became loose, falling in beautiful folds over her snowy neck, while she laid one hand unconsciously on Morton's arm. The music at length abruptly ceased. Then, after a moment's interval, it was renewed, with the opening lines prefacing the serenade to the Rose-Bud, in a slow and sweeter strain, with deep feeling, the highest compliment to her beauty, innocence, and fascination.

Nathan rose at once from the piano declaring he must go. Morton made similar demonstrations, while Walter threw himself in a theatrical vein at Mary's feet, and grasped her hand: "Fair maid, I find no words to tell the thoughts for one I love so well. Do not think of these heartless creatures until my return; tell Morton to take up his pipes and trudge away. Then hear my vow before I go, my dearest—" But at this instant the growl of a dog, with the sound of a snap at his foot, cut off further declarations. Mary sprang to one side in alarm. Walter rose in some trepidation, as Morton and Trenk comprehended the ventriloquial *ruse* on the part of Sabina. She immediately perceived the trick, and laughed tears in her eyes; but Walter protested "against these Bow-wow-ery embellishments not in the bills of the play."

They were now all gone, and this beautiful young creature sat silent and alone before the fire with her aged father. No abatement of the storm was perceptible without, and she commenced preparing a bed for her parent in this warm room. With the assistance of the housekeeper he was soon



comfortably disposed of, and, as he was fatigued with the excitement and pleasures of the evening, he quickly sank into a quiet slumber.

Mary once more resumed her seat at the fire, for her nerves rendered her restless and sleepless, sometimes turning her head to watch the placid sleep of her father. Then the fond memories and thick-coming fancies peopled anew her mind with the pleasing visions of the evening. She thought next of the trials, and struggles, and privations of her girlhood. of the slights, and indignities, and rudeness she had borne when receiving wages: of the privations and infirmities of her parent while she was too little to minister to him. Next rose her first attempts to sustain herself and the cares with which they were accompanied. These were followed by the first dawn of success, and then came the certainty of being able to maintain her position. How much in all this was she grateful! How kind and beneficent had the Almighty been to her! Then to think of the comforts with which her father was now surrounded: the time she had at her disposal to cheer and make him happy; above all, the happiness of having him with her.

It was almost too bright a picture for this innocent girl to contemplate in her present position, with all its blissful hours, with its varied round of delightful pleasures. She was afraid it was too great a state of happiness to last; indeed she sometimes doubted if it were real, if it were not only some seraphic dream that would vanish into a sad awakening. Again she paused and held her breath in suspense, while she asked, in self-communing, if it were not wrong and sinful. But no response came from an upbraiding conscience. Her heart beat quick, but without those throbs that strike mournful, deep-toned notes of warning to an erring soul.



At last she threw herself upon her knees in prayer to pour forth her thanks for the blessings bestowed on her and on her aged parent, to invoke her heavenly Father to guide her erring footsteps from the paths of temptation leading to sin, and to so order that she should always have a light from above to aid her in this world where she was deprived of a kind mother's care and counsel. She rose to impress a sweet kiss on her father's lips, and hastened to her cold room, happy and innocent as she was young and beautiful.

---

## CHAPTER XIX.

WHEN Nathan awoke next day at the usual early hour his eyes fell upon a note upon the table. It was from Charles Nevil, and brief. "Do me the pleasure to breakfast with me in the morning; say nine o'clock; on business." Nathan consequently was punctual to the time indicated.

On entering Nevil's spacious mansion he was ushered into his study or library, where he found that gentleman reading an article in a foreign Review. The room was large and well filled with books; the furniture of massive oak, with green leather cushions for the chairs. An air of solid comfort and of good taste was perceived in every article that was visible. Maps, globes, busts, and scientific instruments were deposited in places most convenient for access; while papers, pamphlets, and periodicals were arranged in systematic order.

"I am much obliged to you, Mr. Trenk," said he, laying down the Review, "for your prompt acceptance of my invitation to breakfast."

"I am happy at all times, Mr. Nevil, to be at your service.



A breakfast business invitation does not denote any calamity affecting the nerves or digestion."

Nevil smiled as he answered: "I am afraid only a breakfast might not tempt you; therefore, as a cream to your chocolate, I had to throw in a dash of something more palatable."

"As a sort of postscript to a lady's letter," added Nathan.

"When had ever one of the fair sex space left for a postscript?"

"You agree, then, with Tony Lumpkin, that the inside of a letter is always the cream of the correspondence," said Nathan.

"Yes. Tony's observation is more sensible than the slander on the ladies."

Thus talking, Nevil led the way to the breakfast-room, where they sat down to some choice dishes, but of which they ate sparingly. "And now, Mr. Trenk, the rage of hunger being appeased, as the old classic author expresses it, let us proceed to business, which will be reversing the order of Jack the Giant-Killer, who declared, 'that now having cut off the heads of my enemies, let us proceed to breakfast.'"

"I think," said Nathan, "that Jack was right in attacking giants early in the day. Pigmies, even, are formidable in postprandial encounters."

"A good application of that nursery tale. But, Mr. Trenk, most fortunately we have no giants to slay." Mr. Nevil then proceeded to state, his attention had been called to the bonds of the Chestnut Swamp Railroad, guaranteed by the Air Line Company; that the enterprise promised the most happy results; but he was not willing to embark in the negociation until better informed as to the available means of the Air Line to make good its guarantee in the event of a default in the Chestnut Swamp. Having learned that Mr.



Trenk had made an examination of the affairs of the Air Line, Nevil wished to benefit by his conclusions, "as you have not," said he, "been influenced by any bias of interest which may affect others in arriving at their more sanguine anticipations."

"It is true I have made an investigation," said Nathan, "and no doubt the Air Line is amply able in its assets to cover the guarantee. But I have now no interest in the matter, and my inquiries were prompted to meet a contingency which might happen to my client, but which did not arise. I have, therefore, never given an opinion on the guarantee, although I thoroughly examined the question."

"Thank you, Mr. Trenk. I will now be willing to entertain the proposition with more confidence."

"But I hope you will not act on what I have mentioned without further inquiry," said Nathan.

"Certainly not; but on a further examination, if your observations are confirmed, and I doubt not they will be, then I will be free to embark."

"I am afraid, Mr. Nevil, that a wrong view is taken of these bonds. You have stated a point to me, and my answer, although true, would still lead to great error if acted on. I do not volunteer opinions; nor must you understand me to say these will ever be paid."

Nevil manifested some surprise at this unexpected remark.

"I do not apprehend your meaning. Could you not be more explicit?"

"The mode in which you have stated the matter does not require it," Nathan answered.

"How could I be more lucid in my question?"

"When Mr. Nevil desires my opinion of these bonds I may, perhaps, answer."



"I have asked your opinion on the only point wherein a doubt might be cast upon them."

To this remark he made no reply. Nevil also remained silent for a few moments in reflection. At last he said: "It is evident we do not understand each other. Perhaps you see objections to these securities which have never been stated?"

Nathan bowed his head affirmatively.

"Then I wish you to tell me what those objections are, if it be proper."

"Our profession," Nathan replied, "are sometimes as much embarrassed as medical men in administering prescriptions. We are called in and desired to prescribe for certain symptoms, and for nothing else. We do so, pocket our fee, and depart; and when an accident happens we are blamed for the loss. Now, Mr. Nevil, you wished my opinion on one point, and perhaps did not desire any more. In truth, you might not have thanked me for too much light. Sometimes it is best not to know too much."

Nevil smiled an assent to this. "But," said he, "I assure you I wish all the light you can throw on these bonds; although it must be confessed I cannot perceive what other objection could be made to them."

"With this understanding, then," said Nathan, "I must tell you the Air Line is not bound in law for the guarantee, and consequently its property will never be held for payment."

"That is a startling objection, to be sure," said Nevil. "Will you tell me why?"

"Because there is no law authorizing this contract."

"Then your opinion is that the bonds are worthless?" asked Nevil.



"The guarantee is worthless, as it is not binding."

Nevil paused a moment as he inquired slowly: "Have you ever intimated this doubt before?"

"Never."

"Can I hope that you will not divulge it as my counsel?"

"I am not aware that you would lose from any business you have intrusted to me, and unless certain that you would be injured, I must express the same opinion whenever I am called upon as counsel."

"Could you not keep it a secret?"

"Not unless specially retained for that purpose, in which event I would have to decline all business from others where this point might arise."

"Is it probable you will be soon consulted on this subject?" asked Nevil.

"Not probable, but I cannot anticipate."

"May I rely on your reticence until you are consulted, Mr. Trenk?"

"Undoubtedly."

"In the event of your giving this opinion to others, may I ask you to apprise me of it?"

"I will do so," said Nathan.

How much longer the conversation, if uninterrupted, would have continued is uncertain; but at this moment the door slowly opened, and a young lady entered with some timidity.

"Shall I come in?" said she, with a sweet, clear voice.

"Come in, sister, by all means, unless you are afraid of this Blue Beard whom I am feasting."

Upon this invitation the tall, graceful, and certainly fascinating Helen Nevil approached and offered her hand to Trenk, who had risen to receive her.



"I owe you, brother Charles, and your company an apology for this intrusion ; but I supposed you were done with business and breakfast."

"Certainly all business is done for, Miss Helen, when you make your appearance ; at least such is the effect upon me."

"Thank you," said she, with a pretty smile ; "and if Charles has no objections to the interruption, I wish you to tell me something."

"I will be as obedient," said Nathan, "as if you were my confessor."

"Then is it true the new opera is in rehearsal?"

"It is true, Miss Helen."

"And a new ballét?"

"That is not true."

"Are any pretty arias in the opera?"

"Two or three, Miss Helen."

"Will you let me hear them?"

"Whenever you wish," said Nathan.

"Come along, then, and we will, I trust, find the grand piano of Charles in tune."

Her brother, smiling, opened the door for them to pass into the music-room, while he once more returned to his library. He threw himself in his accustomed seat, and gave way to the thoughts which crowded on his mind. The information communicated by Trenk had given him timely notice to escape from a tempting but ruinous speculation. It had moreover given him a better insight into Nathan's character. "Cautious and reserved, watchful but silent. And honest withal—yes, honest. I could not induce him to betray a client, and therefore I can trust him." Thus reasoned Nevil to himself, while he slowly made some memoranda on



papers for future reference. "But now for more important matters," said he, as he rose and secured the doors against interruption. Opening a secret recess in the wall, concealed ingeniously in a panel, he drew forth from this safe deposit box after box, small in size, but bound with brass bands and rivets of great strength. Unlocking one of these, he took out a case containing several miniatures of ladies. One was set in diamonds, and sparkled brilliantly in the dim light to which it was exposed. Another beautiful countenance was revealed in plain setting, without one ornament to divide admiration with the painting. A third was in a silver case, inlaid with blue silk velvet, having steel clasps. Others were more or less rich or ornamental. But he gazed long and in deep attention upon each, as if he were drawing from the leaves of memory some sweet legend adapted to the lovely objects before him.

Another box revealed precious jewels of great price; diamonds in clusters, some set in silver, others in gold; strings of pearl, and in various ornaments; turquoise and rubies, amethyst, and many more. Here a large ring was studded with gems, and there a breastpin in the form of a greyhound or fox dazzled the sight. What memories and associations were linked with these jewels! What tender recollections did they revive! If their intrinsic value were equal to the wealth of princes, what must have been the inestimable price at which they were held from the tender scenes with which they were united in memory?

Another box was full of letters and written memoranda. They were done up in neat packages, classified by dates. A few of these he read, or glanced over, as if he had their contents engraven on his soul. His eye would dilate, his cheeks burn, and his lip tremble as he devoured the lines of some



with throbbing pulse. These in turn he quit to open others, written in a different chirography, in more masculine boldness, and in several languages. At times he would permit them to fall from his hand, as he sat in deep thought, meditating on their contents. He would again start from his chair and stride across the floor in agitation and mental embarrassment. Anon he would resume the perusal, and sometimes smile at the light thoughts suggested by them. At last he returned everything to its appropriate place, and hastily closed the panel over all. But he still held in his hand one package of writings, which he threw upon the table, to turn his attention to them.

Charles Nevil, as has been remarked, was reputed wealthy. He was known to be strictly devoted to business, without any interest ever being manifested in subjects of literature, science, or art. True, he could sometimes elucidate happily a contested point in history, or explain a difficulty in physical science, or make an apt quotation. But all was with an air of such indifference that his friends could only regret his fine talents wasted in the eager pursuit of riches. His manners in the presence of ladies were distant, formal, and almost cold; while, for some unexplained cause, inexplicable perhaps to the sex, he was a general favorite with them. His devotion, however, to his mother and sister constrained him to be seen much in society; but it was evidently a constraint from which he was glad to escape. He was never known to accept invitations from ladies to visit them.

Another peculiarity no less remarkable was his extensive information on all subjects connected with business affairs; on men in the city, their histories, antecedents, relatives; and on the current events, however foreign they might appear to his pursuits. The sources of his knowledge were incomprehen-



ble, and to some it seemed he possessed the faculty of acquiring information of facts by a process of mental induction. His fine perception of individual character, his laborious habits of investigation, and the cool, dispassionate judgment he formed of things around, may have perhaps enabled him to arrive at conclusions, and even to anticipate events unforeseen to others. He had long ago discovered Nathan was neither rich nor dissipated, when Trenk was not aware that he knew him at all, and he had estimated his ambition and abilities almost before others noticed either. At the present moment he believed Nathan to be the most promising young lawyer in the metropolis, with a highly cultivated, well balanced legal mind, of good habits, and of indomitable industry. But he was far from expressing his thoughts, knowing full well the false, firmly rooted opinion to the contrary, among even those who were his clients. But how much more he knew of Trenk is uncertain.

When Nevil opened the package of papers, a small miniature on ivory fell upon the table. He took it in his hand and gazed long and steadily on the young and charming features. Slowly a smile crept over his face, as he exclaimed: "It is she herself, life-like, yet not like mortal life; but it is true. Truth of the last century, still how different from the living reality! History is not more unlike the truth of that period than she to this beautiful picture, taken in her first womanhood. And this is she, the belle of the past, the old Lady Dowager of to-day. Look at those eyes, with their piercing, glistening brightness, so much like the eyes of the living. Well, Miss, judging from your sweet countenance, you must have a will of your own, and fire enough to keep a truant lover in a plentiful supply of hot water. Perhaps this too vivid flashing eye indicated reason impaired, a tinge of mania,



which he perceived or feared, and consequently fled in time."

Nevil laid down the antique miniature to unfold a bundle of old letters, worn, worm-eaten, and somewhat defaced. Rapidly he ran over the common expressions and tender phrases, excuses, chidings, and complainings that to him were without interest. In reading further his eye fell on the following passages in a lady's handwriting :

"It seemed to me you were cold. Neither your words, looks, nor manner denoted it; but a something in the air breathed it to me until my veins were chilled by the thought. Write to me, and only tell me that is a vain fancy or whim—a summer cloud upon the heavenly horizon of my fond hopes. Write to me, and tell me that your love is like mine, deep, absorbing, eternal. I must be quit of this phantom of doubt. I must once more see you, to hear that voice which is sweeter than an angel's tongue, and to catch that smile which brings peace, and joy, and hope to my heart."

\* \* \* \* \*

"No answer! no answer! and I am desolate. My heart is sick, my soul is crushed, and this from you, for whom I would sacrifice my life, and for whom I would toil, labor, and beg; for whom I would give up every comfort in life, and all other earthly enjoyments, and imperil my soul's salvation to be only with you, and to call you all my own. I cannot contemplate a change in your affections; I dare not even think of it, for my veins are filled with fire, my brain becomes dizzy, and my feet fail me at the horrid thought. O God! pardon me in thy mercy for permitting my love to set up an idol in my heart for never-ceasing worship. Pity me for this earthly love which has raised in my thoughts a mortal above my



Creator. Spare, spare me, for I have ventured all upon this hope, which, if lost, must send me wretched and raving to an early grave."

\* \* \* \* \*

"At last your answer has come. Farewell! May the Almighty spare me, spare my brain from going mad. As I repeat that word I am mad, mad, mad! Well, go, for ever, for ever! I have lost all mortal feeling; I do not love you now; I do not hate; I have no words to tell you of the consuming fire in my breast, and heart, and blood, and brain. You have done all, and I am punished. No hope, more! All despair in the future, and death at last!"

---

## CHAPTER XX.

CHARLES NEVIL carefully folded up these letters, that seemed to be emanations of a mind under the most intense excitement. The brain must have been at the point of insanity, and the veins consumed with a liquid fire, when they were written. Again a cast of thought came over him—over him, this grasping, avaricious plodder after wealth. He felt for the poor young creature thus desolate in the morning of life, and a tear almost dimmed his eye as he pictured the intensity of her suffering and agony. No, no; she had no longer the common feelings of humanity; she did not love, she did not hate; but it was something of both; she would have killed him in her affection; she would have loved him in her revenge. Poor soul! what beauty, what pride, what passion, what fire! Her strong feelings have kept her alive; her desire for revenge has been to her the fabulous fountain



of perpetual youth. Well! she had her revenge, which came at last; but with it remorse; and remorse has revived those tender feelings which some of these musty letters portray.

Once more he returned to an examination of the various documents in relation to the history of this false lover. Nevil was a member of a secret fraternity, extending over many lands, and he was commanded by the primate of the order to transmit an account of a deceased brother, Lionel Gray, an American. In Nevil's researches these papers now before him had come into his possession; for Lionel Gray was the young merchant who had won the affections of Frances Ormond, and who in a manner so cruel deserted her.

To Nevil the cause of this desertion was known, but he had never before been apprised of the fatal consequences to this lady. It appeared that Lionel became aware of the existence of this secret brotherhood from some revelations made to him by one of the unfortunate victims condemned to the guillotine in the Reign of Terror. A few hours before the fatal cart arrived at the Conciergerie to convey the Chevalier Lansay to his doom, that nobleman intrusted his little personal trinkets and last wishes to Lionel, who had been permitted to visit him in prison.

The Chevalier, having served in the French army in the American Revolution, was well known to young Gray's father. He had sought out Lionel on his first arrival in Paris, and had been of much service to him. This nobleman was too conspicuous a mark to escape when every man and woman of note perished on the scaffold, if they did not effect their escape by flight. Lansay remained in Paris, to be denounced as an aristocrat, and to be arrested.

Lionel would also have shared the same fate had not a



youthful folly saved him. In the first effervescence of the Revolution he joined the Sans Culottes, and rejoicing about the same time in his first pair of whiskers, he, in the full burst of patriotism, painted them tricolor. This soon became a distinguishing mark, by which he was known everywhere as the young American of the Beard. As the Reign of Terror came on, he retained his colors for safety ; which, with the known fact of his being an American, was sufficient. The Chevalier gave him a sealed letter to a prince in Italy, who was then the primate of the secret fraternity, and at the same time desired Lionel not to marry until he received a communication in answer. He readily promised all his noble friend wished, and was present when the Chevalier's head fell into the bloody basket. He immediately quit Paris in horror, to return home by the first sailing packet.

For seven long years were the eyes of the secret brotherhood upon Lionel ; not directly, but indirectly, through agents, employés, and correspondents. His talents, his manners, his learning, his accomplishments, his virtues, his vices, were all known. His habits, his associations, his position, and property were also carefully reported. But as yet no response came from the prince to the Chevalier's missive ; Lionel had long forgotten it, and also the partial engagement to Lansay respecting an answer.

When least expected, the long deferred letter in reply to the Chevalier's arrived. It was brought by a scientific gentleman, a traveller, who was making a tour through America. But it only referred to the bearer for an explanation. The traveller announced that Lionel was elected a member of the fraternity, and at the same time informed him that none of the order were ever permitted to marry, nor even allowed to have it known they were on terms of intimacy or



confidence with any lady except near relatives. The Chevalier had apprised him before of this interdict. But he was astonished at the total prohibition of female society beyond the domestic circle; more especially as it was well understood that nobleman had sacrificed his life in saving a young duchess of the Faubourg St. Germain. He did not use the least precaution for himself in his courageous, self-immolating efforts, lest he would thereby endanger her escape. The duchess published a narrative in which this fact was first revealed.

After many long conferences with the scientific traveller, Lionel at last consented to enter the order. He forthwith broke off his engagement with Frances Ormond, and soon after sailed for France, as their commercial house was on the eve of bankruptcy through the French spoliations on American shipping. When he arrived the Directory was overthrown, and Napoleon was at the head of the government. It was difficult in the confusion of affairs to gain an audience or an attentive hearing, and it was therefore impossible to hope for redress with indemnity. Lionel, moreover, found himself a stranger in those streets, where formerly he was so well known. All the familiar faces were gone; all was new and strange; not only the people, but names, and even the physiognomy of the people. He made repeated efforts to gain an entrance in official quarters, but his success was partial, and redress distant as ever. His misery was intense, for ruin was before him, with the destruction of the fond hopes of his father.

A vitality is in despair, a levity in the midst of mourning; sometimes a lightness of heart when all is over, and all is known to be lost. In one of these strange moods he dressed himself in his costly court apparel; he adorned his person



with all the taste, and art, and rich embellishments within his power. Then, with a smiling lip, and apparently the lightest heart, he repaired to the Palace. His easy impudence, his careless confidence, enabled him to force his way into the most secluded apartments, where he found himself all at once among a crowd of the high officers of state whose names are now historical.

Although a stranger to all present, he was aware that a new face was not a surprise where so many around him were not much better known, where some new man daily started into notoriety. In such a brilliant company might be one of the brotherhood. But immediately a distant folding-door opened, and a small, thin, young officer, with a sallow visage and boyish appearance, in the full dress of a General of Division, entered. The company formed themselves into a half circle as the First Consul approached. He addressed each person as he moved slowly along, and listened for a moment to the reply of the one spoken to. At length he stood before Lionel and fixed his large, piercing eye upon the young American. Without quailing or for a moment losing his presence of mind, Lionel, with all the assumed audacity of which he had command, stepped one pace forward, and, in a voice loud enough to be heard by all (for all were gazing at him), said: "General, a late cadet of the House of D'Lansay wishes to serve France. Bourbon or Bonaparte, he cares not. He serves his country under any flag that saves her honor and leads to victory. You may have heard of the late Chevalier. I stood at his side as the knife fell."

A gleam of satisfaction was in the eye of the First Consul as he moved on with the expression, "It is well." Lionel immediately made a sign to attract any one who knew the signal, and waited the result, watching in the meanwhile



the movements of that most extraordinary man of modern times. Napoleon passed on, and having completed the circle, vanished through the folding-doors where he had entered. Lionel turned to take his departure with the others who were leaving, when he felt his arm grasped by a middle-aged officer of high rank, who spoke with somewhat a German intonation of voice, as he observed: "Will Monsieur permit me to ask how the Chevalier Lansay has a younger brother, when his mother died in giving him birth?"

"You knew him, then?"

"Like a brother," squeezing Lionel's arm.

They walked on together in silence till they had cleared the Palace and regained the gardens in front, where they were beyond the reach of interruption.

"Now tell me, Monsieur Gray, what prompted you to such audacity in the presence of the First Consul?"

"Desperation."

"Well, it was successful. You are the first of the old noblesse who have given in their adhesion!" and here the General laughed at the thought, as he inquired: "What is the cause of your despair?"

Lionel told him of all his troubles, and of the difficulty of gaining even a hearing where all were new faces, and the offices in so much confusion. He thought he might find one of the brotherhood in the court circle, to have a person to counsel with. "At least," said he, "no harm was in trying."

"Is that all?" exclaimed the General. "I thought from the signal thrown out, some impending danger, some—you know what claimed the attention of our order: and that the happy lot would fall upon me. But it is only your affair, and of course I cannot assist."

"I want no assistance, sir," interrupted Lionel. "I only



want a gentleman to give me some counsel. I would scorn to ask aid from the brotherhood for myself."

"Nor would aid be extended if it were sought. Your temerity to-day, however, convinces me you are no unworthy member. When you declared you were with the Chevalier at the guillotine, I knew you and your name. Friends you will have so soon as the Faubourg hear of your arrival. The Chevalier's fate is deeply deplored. But his relatives have no influence, and cannot serve you."

"Then I am still at a loss for friendly advice," Lionel remarked.

"Your impudence is your best friend," said the General. "Go boldly, as you did to-day; go to the Minister; tell him you demand so many hundred thousand francs, and promise him the one-half. Double your account, and generosity will cost you nothing."

Lionel looked at him in amazement, as he exclaimed: "He would hurl me out of the window!"

"He will be more likely to invite you to dinner."

"Is he so rapacious?" Lionel asked.

"To be sure. All these new men must first be gorged before they learn how to regulate their appetites. But they are all afraid of Americans since the exposé made by your Commissioners, when Talleyrand wanted a bribe."

"That was an unfortunate exposure for our private interests at this court," said Lionel.

"Had it not been for that revelation, Monsieur Gray, which the English have republished so often, to show, no doubt, their immaculate honesty by comparison, all your spoliations would have long since been adjusted. But you are a young nation, and will live and learn. So farewell," said he, departing. The advice was taken.



When Lionel Gray returned to New York from France, it was to assume greater responsibility, and to launch forth as the most enterprising and successful in business. His wealth was increasing rapidly, and he bid fair to rank as the most opulent merchant in the Union. But the disturbed condition of political affairs entailed heavy losses upon him; and on several occasions he was on the verge of ruin, from which he retrieved himself with great skill. The war with England put a check upon foreign commerce, and he once more suffered. But he always maintained the reputation for princely magnificence and hospitality. A serious illness, it was said, had affected his mind in so much that his powers of combination and prompt action were impaired. When in the decline of life, he married a young orphan lady, and a few years thereafter disasters came thick and heavy upon him.

It was the fraud of a friend in whom he confided that finally effected his ruin and caused his death. Mr. Chester desired some funds for a short period, and asked Lionel to aid him. This was readily granted by the loan of some securities not then required by Mr. Gray, but which Mr. Chester could use in procuring a loan. These securities were deposited with Lionel as a trust, but he merged them with his other property, knowing himself good for their amount.

When they were called for by the parties to whom they belonged, Lionel sent to Chester to return them. Chester denied ever having received them, and demanded the proof. The answer came like a stunning blow to Lionel. He lost his presence of mind, and in his perplexity made some incoherent revelations, which induced a suspicion of his honesty. The cry of embezzlement was raised against him. To his friends he said Mr. Chester had received the bonds as a confidential debt; but Chester denied all knowledge of the



transaction. A run upon Lionel was made by his creditors ; his house stopped payment ; he was a ruined man.

The papers of the period were full of statements and comments, in which Lionel Gray was portrayed as the swindling bankrupt, the lying scoundrel in purple and fine linen, who, unable to conceal his villanies, was willing in his ruin to drag down honorable men, like the highly respectable Mr. Chester, one of the purest and best men of the age, who was an honor to any country.

Forthwith writs were placed in the sheriff's hands by every creditor to seize the body of the said Lionel Gray, and him securely keep in the vile, filthy jail with common malefactors until delivered by due course of law. For such was the happy state of affairs "in the good old times," of which so much is said in praise. Lionel was consequently arrested, while ministering to his young wife with an infant in her arms, and torn away from his home to leave misery and despair behind him. On the road to prison he asked permission to enter a tavern for a glass of water. He was there seized with a fit, and died on the floor of the common bar-room.

A few nights after his death, an old lawyer might have been seen seated in a dark, dingy office in Reade street, deeply immersed in papers. He was small in stature, with fine, delicate features, almost feminine, dressed with great neatness, but in a style then considered antiquated. He took down a book in manuscript, and turned to a leaf that was marked, where he read as follows :

"Wednesday.—To-day my distress is at its height. To-morrow I must starve.

"Thursday.—I called on Lionel Gray, who I learned had arrived out direct from home. Found him in beautiful lodgings in Rue St. Honore, No. 97, *au second*. He



“received me kindly, cordially. I stated my distress. Whereupon he opened his secretary and drew forth several rouleaux of gold, which he placed before me. ‘Col,’ said he, ‘I know you are a man of honor, and I am glad of the opportunity to verify what I say. Take what you wish, take all. I care not how much. Do not tell me what you take, as I know you will return it to the last franc whenever you can.’”

The old lawyer threw down the book, and rising in agitation, passionately exclaimed: “Good God! and that man arrested for fraud! for fraud! to die in a common bar-room.” He lifted his clenched hand to heaven, as if registering a vow of vengeance. But a knock was heard at the door, and as he opened it all trace of recent excitement had vanished.

“Have you seen him?” was his first exclamation to the man who entered.

“Yes, I have; and here are the numbers,” handing a small paper with figures on it.

The lawyer turned to some memoranda and remarked: “They are the same.”

“Now for Mr. Gray’s books—have you secured them?”

“I have the one you want here with me.”

This book the lawyer carefully examined, and compared with the memorandum.

“Now for the bank clerk—where is he?” asked the lawyer.

“In an oyster-cellar round the corner,” leaving the office to bring him.

The next morning, about noon, the same little old gentleman walked into the counting-room of Mr. Chester, who received him with a cold, formal bow, and without inviting him to a seat. The lawyer, however, took a chair, as he quietly remarked in the blandest voice: “Mr. Chester,



when you are at leisure, I would crave a moment on business."

"What is it, sir?" said he.

"I wish the bonds which you received from that good man, Mr. Gray, who is now in his grave."

"I never received one of those bonds, Colonel, from him, nor from any one else."

"That is enough. It is all I wanted to know," replied the old lawyer, in the same bland tone. "You will now have to meet the consequences."

"What consequences, Colonel?"

"The charge of larceny, of theft," and the words came hissing, rasping, scathing from his old lips.

Chester turned pale.

"Yes, you sold them, sir; and I have all the evidence which will send you to the penitentiary. Mr. Gray is now dead, and no witness can testify your ever receiving them from him. You cannot prove how you obtained them, but I can prove that you sold them, along with your denial that you ever had them."

Mr. Chester sank into a chair, with the sweat standing on his brow. "That is a serious charge."

"It is a serious crime, coupled as it is with the moral guilt of the murder of that good man, that generous friend whom you have betrayed."

"But what can I do now?" said the merchant.

"Redeem the bonds, and let me have them in two days."

"I do not know where they are."

"Where you sold them," said the lawyer, rising and walking to the door. "Remember, they must be forthcoming in forty-eight hours."

Mr. Chester, humbled to the dust, approached the old man



extending his hand for a parting salutation. "No, sir, no, sir," cried the lawyer, drawing up to his full height with dignity and indignation, while his fine dark eye flashed fire. "Some gentlemen may avoid me to whom I have been a benefactor; but in these arms one of the bravest of American generals, a hero, died on the field of battle, and they shall never be grasped by the hand of a felon." He raised his warning finger, and slowly walked away as he uttered: "Remember!"

What ensued may be inferred from the following leader in the "Sunday Retrospect:"

"We had supposed the drama of the bonds embezzled had closed appropriately with poetic justice in the sudden and miserable death of Mr. Gray. A sequel, however, has been furnished. Mr. Chester has confessed that he received them. It was a question with him of payment or of the penitentiary. After robbing his friend and benefactor, after bringing disaster on his affairs, destruction on his family, and death to Mr. Gray, he has been compelled to acknowledge himself the culprit, with Mr. Gray the victim of his crimes. It would be a melancholy satisfaction to know confession and restitution were effected by the compunctions of conscience. But unfortunately it has not even that extenuation. It was only under a threat of prosecution for larceny, and the certain conviction to follow, for the proof was conclusive of his selling the securities, which compelled him to disgorge his stolen plunder.

"Ten days ago the papers extolled this same Chester as 'the honorable man, the highly respectable Mr. Chester, one of the purest and best men of the age, and an honor to any country.' He had better leave soon for parts unknown. These regions must be uncongenial to his fine sense of honor,



of friendship, of common honesty. Had he not better retire from business to escape contamination?

"It was only yesterday the mortal remains of Mrs. Gray were borne down Broadway to her last resting-place, by the side of her late husband, to whom she was married four or five years ago. She has left a little infant daughter a few months old. Will the honorable Mr. Chester, the highly respectable Mr. Chester, the purest and best of men, Mr. Chester, think of all this when rejoicing over his escape from the tonsorial operation of having one-half his head shaved at Sing Sing."

On Monday morning all the daily papers copied the above from the "Retrospect," with comments on the subject in both their editorial columns and money articles. The hard fate of Mr. Gray and his family was deplored for a few days, to be then forgotten as a matter of no further interest. Chester withdrew from business into private obscurity. The little child was taken by a spinster lady, the step-sister of its mother.

When Mrs. Vandorp was appealed to on behalf of her cousin, Mr. Gray, who was her nearest relative then living, she refused all aid in his embarrassment. She even declared he might rot in jail before she would extend a helping hand. The claims of the infant upon her compassion were also unheeded. It was brought to her in order to affect her sympathy. But the strong resemblance to its mother only served to create additional repugnance, if not the most marked hatred, to the innocent, unconscious little one.

Yet her feelings were too strong to be lasting. After Mr. Gray was in his grave, old and fond memories came back upon her. She would then have given all to relieve his distress, as sweet remembrances of former love revived in all



their tenderness. But she still disliked the infant. Remorse was meting out punishment to her for bad and wicked feelings to Mr. Gray. But still she offered no atonement towards the child.

---

## CHAPTER XXI.

AT this point the researches of Charles Nevil into the history of Lionel Gray ended. He had no further interest in the fate of the infant Emma. Indeed he might have forgotten she ever existed, had he not accidentally met her on a visit, one evening some time after this, to his mother and sister. Her beautiful countenance, with features tinged by some slight sadness, induced him, while unobserved, to notice the interesting little lady. His sister afterwards spoke of her in high terms of commendation, while his mother deplored her hard lot, as she remembered well Emma's parents.

But it is to other scenes and to other persons our narrative must turn for better information concerning the early years of her life. Miss Lucinda Tantis, the step-sister of her mother, was residing in New Jersey when she learned the death of Mr. Gray. Miss Lucinda was not a beauty, and had relinquished all aspirations or hopes of entering into the bonds or bliss of wedlock. She was without fortune, but with the assistance of a few hundred dollars her brother annually remitted, she was enabled to live comfortably. Her only amusement and occupation were working for Dorcas and missionary societies, whereby her handiwork was distributed over the four quarters of the globe. Miss Lucinda cared but little where her work went, as she had full com-



pensation for her time and trouble in the pleasant little reunions, where the mutual exchange of feminine opinions and information went hand in hand with the clothing and conversion of the heathen. She had no opinions of her own, nor was she ever known to repeat the observations of others. She spoke but seldom, and what she said was nothing of importance, if it were not silly. Although supposed to have plenty of sense from her unobtrusive, unoffensive conduct, yet her words were not words of much wisdom, nor of much learning, nor much of anything.

When she heard of the arrival of her brother James from the East Indies, she went over to New York to meet him. He had returned from a successful voyage, with the proceeds well secured; and with no small ambition to make a figure in the metropolis. Mr. Tantis was decidedly liberal in his expenditures—when in funds. He therefore proposed to his sister to come and live with him in the city. An opportunity offered of purchasing an excellent house, already furnished, cheap for cash. Thus they became settled in a new part of the city, which is now an attractive street, near to the most fashionable avenue.

Mr. Tantis read in the morning papers the editorial comments on the base conduct of Mr. Chester, and he remembered Mrs. Gray was his step-sister, whom he had once seen. But as it would be a good introduction into society as her brother, and might even bring him some pleasant notoriety, he at once went into deep mourning in his affliction for this near and dear relative. He also compelled his sister to bring the little infant home, sorely against the spinster's will, as it interfered with her benevolent operations in the clothing and conversion of the heathen.

He had some intentions of administering on the estate of



Mr. Gray, but was forestalled in that purpose. One of the creditors was selected for the trust, who performed his duty so energetically that the property of the deceased paid all the debts, and left a balance of exactly forty-six dollars and thirty-six cents for the young heiress in her cradle. All the claimants against Mr. Gray declared the Administrator was an honest, straightforward man of business, while the balance of forty-six dollars and thirty-six cents was not a sufficient inducement for any learned counsel to show a shameful abuse of confidence and a rapacious haste to pay off the debts, without any regard for the interests of the helpless orphan.

Mr. Tantis, as guardian of Emma, was formally waited on by the honest, straightforward administrator, who paid over the forty-six dollars and thirty-six cents, without any questions asked of the India merchant for an exhibit of a legal authority to receive the amount. The honest, straightforward man also transmitted in several dray-carts a quantity of trunks and chests, the remaining effects of the late Mr. Gray, which were duly consigned to the garret until further required.

Mr. Tantis was launched under these favorable auspices into his native element, the business ocean of Wall street. Coming from the East, where he was supposed to have amassed a large fortune, he was complimented on his wealth and on those superior attainments only acquired in the Celestial Empire. But it does not follow all are wise men who come from the East. Mr. Tantis was unlucky. And his folly was the cause. He met various fortune in his business operations. Sometimes he was successful. And sometimes he was at low ebb, as on the day he was first described seated among the falling leaves in the Washington Parade Ground. Again his stars would prove more auspicious, enabling him to



hold forth once more in Delmonico's bar-room on his infallible sagacity in speculations.

Miss Emma passed the first years of her childhood in a monotonous existence, without any one to care for her in particular, and without having any one to whom she was much attached. When ten years of age she discovered that neither her Aunt Lucinda nor her Uncle James had much good sense. This was an important discovery. She thought the clergyman at whose church she was a constant attendant must be a much greater person, and consequently his wife must also be a superior woman. She knew that kind lady; she soon began to look up to her, and finally to believe no one her equal in the whole world. But yet Emma had many weary, weary hours and days. She was without relations. She had none to cling to, and she became sensible she was alone in the world. These thoughts were very distressing whenever she gave way to them. But in time, with her habits of self-control, the kind advice of the good lady, and the consolation her religious instruction afforded, she became reconciled to her lot, and ceased repining at fate.

On the afternoon when Charles Nevil observed her interesting countenance with attention, she returned home before dark. Her Aunt Lucinda was ill and bed-ridden; she had to take tea alone in silence. Her uncle seldom came up town until late, and at an early hour she retired to her cheerful, comfortable room in the third story, to read or to divert her mind from sad thoughts.

The servants were in the kitchen in the basement, where they felt themselves independent of all interference for the remainder of the evening, with their mistress too much of an invalid to molest them, and Miss Emma too inoffensive ever to be in their way. The laundry woman came in with her



basket, which she placed on the floor, while she took a seat, waiting for one of the servant girls to inform Miss Lucinda of her arrival.

"You are late to-night," said one of the Abigails to the German woman with the basket.

"Yes, rather late," was the meek reply of the woman, who was past middle age, but with a fresh, mild, and prepossessing countenance. Her flaxen hair was slightly turning grey, as indicated by a few locks seen under her old straw bonnet. Her shoulders were covered with a faded but thick warm shawl. She had on stout shoes over coarse woollen stockings. But her dress was neat, scrupulously clean, and her whole appearance very favorable.

"I wish Miss Lucinda would come," said she, at last, as a gentle hint to the girls to apprise her.

"Indeed you will not see Miss Lucinda to-night, if that is what you are waiting for," was the surly answer.

"Miss Lucinda told me when you come, to send you to her room," said the other, without the least compunction for the falsehood.

"She is sick and in bed," added the first of these kitchen maidens.

The laundress seized her basket, requesting them to show her the way.

"You may find it for yourself. Who was your nigger last year? Not me, I tell you," was the pert reply from one of them, with a toss of her head.

The German woman stood for a moment looking at them in surprise, and then asked which way she had to go.

"This is the vay, the vay," one of them exclaimed, throwing open a door at the foot of a dark staircase, as she mocked the pronunciation of the laundress.



The woman ascended the stairs in fear and trembling; for, like all the lower orders of her nation, she was extremely superstitious. The legends of the apparitions of the rivers and forests of the Rhine, of the old castles, and Hartz mountains, were as much a part of her creed as the Augsburg Confession of Faith. She was not, however, illiterate, having learned reading and writing in English as well as in her own language. Nor was she a common washer-woman, but a clear-starcher whom ladies employed upon their finer articles of toilet, and with whom she was a great favorite for her skill as well as for her honesty and punctuality. Miss Lucinda did not often require her services, and therefore she was as yet unacquainted in the house beyond the kitchen, where Emma had seen her enter sometimes in passing the parlor windows, and was told who she was by her aunt.

Step by step did the laundress slowly ascend, and, by the faint glimmer of gas-light in the hall, she essayed the next flight. Before reaching the landing she had forgotten, in her fright, how far she had come, but she groped her way onward and upward, hoping soon to be relieved from darkness. When on the third floor, a half-open door revealed a light which sent a thrill through her frame, her heart and pulse beating quick with that supernatural terror which comes over persons dreading an apparition. Her first glance within the apartment caused her to start back in mortal fear; her eyes almost shot from her head; she could feel her hair rising on end under her bonnet. Spell-bound, she stood cold as a statue, while her limbs seemed to tremble, and a frozen, clammy sweat gathered on her forehead.

"Come in, Rosey," said a sweet voice from the room.

"It's her; it speaks, it speaks," ejaculated the terrified woman through her chattering teeth.



"Come in, Rosey," repeated the same musical voice. The woman would have fled in horror, but her limbs refused to obey her will, and as the seductive summons for the third time sounded on her ear, she felt herself moving forward to the object without any self-volition. She knew it was certain death to disobey the invocation of a spectre; but it seemed as though something more irresistible brought her into the presence.

Emma had sat down before a small table, over which hung a gas burner with an ornamental paper-shade. The light fell strong upon the page she was reading, with her head resting on one hand, as she sat facing the door when the clear-starcher first looked in.

The woman stood pale and trembling. "What is the matter; you seem frightened?" asked Emma, looking up with large dark eyes.

Rosey sank into a chair, but was still incapable of speech. With a great effort, however, in which she tried to summon her knowledge of English words that had escaped her memory, in her agitation she exclaimed, at last, in a low tone: "What is your name?"

"Emma."

The woman started again in fright as she asked: "What more?"

"Emma Gray."

With the same steady gaze the woman kept her eyes rigidly fixed for a long time, and then slowly exclaimed: "She died twenty years ago."

"That was my mother."

"No, it was you."

"I was then only born, Rosey."

"No, the baby died; so they told me."



"That is the mistake. Did you know my mother?"

"I was with you when the baby was born."

"With my mother when I was born?"

"Yes," answered the woman, thoughtfully. "Then the baby did not die after all?" Hereupon she burst into a flood of tears which swept away all the spectral illusions from her mind.

"I lived with your mother, your father, for many, many years," she continued, wiping away her thick-falling tears, "and I thought you were dead. See, here is a picture of your mother I keep in my bosom for ever," drawing out a miniature, with a small gold chain attached.

Emma gazed long on the precious relic of her sainted parent, in which she discovered a striking resemblance to herself. It was, moreover, with great reluctance she handed it back into the coarse hands of the laundress, who deposited it with great care in the folds of her plain dress.

"But, Rosey, my mother died only a few months after I was born; so they all tell me. Where were you then?"

"I was in the country," answered the woman, once more giving way to a fit of sobbing and tears. When she had recovered her composure and remained silent for a few moments, she remarked:

"I want to love you, Miss Emma; to be your mother; to work for you; to nurse you, if you are sick; to make you happy; to tell you of your dear father, he was such a gentleman; and your mother, such a good, kind lady." Here she took Emma's hand to kiss it and press it to her bosom.

The old shawl had fallen from her shoulders in her excitement, which enabled the young lady to observe the cleanly neatness of her apparel. She had also removed the dilapidated straw bonnet, to arrange her flaxen hair, that had come



down partly over her face in the fright. The clear-starcher, thus relieved of these exterior habiliments, presented a more cheerful appearance. The cadaverous hue also on her cheek had given place to a milder tinge of color, and her excellent teeth, displayed in a faint smile, imparted to her mild countenance an amiable expression of great benevolence. Emma not only felt the kindness, but began to appreciate the fond creature's good wishes and intentions. It was a relief to know there was one to love her; one, too, who had loved her mother, and who still cherished her memory as a saint. It was a new and bright link between her and the past, between her and her parents, of whom she had no remembrance.

"Yes, Rosey, I will love you. We will be the best of friends when you come to tell me about my mother and father. I know she was kind to you, very kind, when you remember it after so many years."

"And your father, too. He was so kind, so good to me. They treated me like their own child, and were like a father and mother to me. Then to think how your father died, and for what." Here her feelings overpowered the afflicted woman, and her tears flowed fast, interrupting her words, until they were no longer intelligible.

Emma watched her emotion in silence, while much affected by sympathy for this former servant, who thus testified her devoted affection for her parents, long since in their graves. Rosey regained her self-control slowly after drying her tears, which evidently relieved her heart of the load of grief upon it, caused by these sad and mournful reminiscences.

"I will come soon again, Miss Emma," gathering up her shawl on her shoulders, and adjusting her bonnet. "I will come again. But to think how wicked I have been, not to be certain you were living; not to be with you when you



were a baby. May your mother in heaven forgive me, for I can never forgive myself!" The tears flowed again in streams from her eyes, as she again seized Emma's hand to press the young lady to her bosom before she left the room.

Not a day passed after this scene without some token of Rosey's affection for the orphan child. She would call to talk with Emma, to tell her of former times and scenes, or to ask questions of her about herself and her past history. She brought little presents which she believed would be acceptable. The most luscious fruit to be found in the markets and choice bouquets of flowers from conservatories were brought; even the hot-houses supplied her with their large clusters of grapes at seasons when most acceptable. Gloves and other little articles of dress were added to the catalogue, until Emma became alarmed for the expense the kind soul was incurring for her pleasure. She could not refuse accepting whatever Rosey might bring, for she was powerless in the hands of this meek and humble woman, who somehow had, through her kindness and affection, begun to exercise an unbounded control.

When it became at last equally painful to accept or to refuse these proofs of affection, Emma determined in her perplexity to consult the clergyman, Mr. Chillinworth, for whom she had so much veneration and regard. This good man was of that class of ministers who attend strictly to their clerical duties, without any wish for notoriety and fame out of their appropriate sphere. He listened to her with much interest and attention as she related the first interview with Rosey, and the subsequent attachment to her. When Emma concluded her account, he took some time to consider how he should advise, as it was a matter falling strictly within the line of duty towards the orphan, who was one of his parish-



ioners, and finally told Emma to wait until he made some further inquiry, as well as reflected on the subject.

Mr. Chillinworth had learned from Emma the number and street where Rosey lived. In order, therefore, to ascertain more about her, he called on a Lutheran minister, an acquaintance whom he had long known, having charge of a congregation in that quarter of the city. Mr. Hildebrand received his brother divine with much pleasure, as they had not met lately. He was still further rejoiced when he found he could serve Mr. Chillinworth in his praiseworthy mission. He knew Rosana well; had known her many years. "Let me see," said he, turning to a book of memoranda, "I have known the good woman these fifteen years, when she first attended my church, where she has been a regular communicant ever since."

Mr. Hildebrand, like his visitor, in the discharge of his pastoral duties had watched carefully over his flock, and knew each of their little histories, their joys and their sorrows, their troubles and their trials, to rejoice or sympathize with them as they severally required his congratulation or condolence. He considered the welfare of his people as a part of his own existence, and in his solicitude for their happiness he knew and remembered all the important incidents of their lives. In his eyes, whether they were in the most humble or in a more exalted sphere, they were the same to him. They all alike needed his ministering care, which he gave alike to all.

The laundress had never been married; but it seemed for many years she had more than the cares of one family upon her hands. Both a brother and sister arrived from Europe, and both were married, with families of little children. Her brother was a musical professor, a genius, whose great talent



attracted notice when he was quite a boy in Germany. He subsequently wandered into Italy to perfect himself in the art or science. There he met a young woman from France, who was finishing her musical education, to appear on the lyric stage. In their love and folly they married. But his laborious habits, with systematic economy, enabled him to triumph over pecuniary embarrassments. In his affection for a younger sister, he sent for her to come and live with him in the sunny South.

This younger sister became attached to a Spanish student, sent to Italy to study the civil law under some celebrated professors. He married her, and was disinherited and discarded by his family for his disobedience, and for the unpardonable sin of an alliance with a peasant girl. The young Spaniard had therefore to turn his accomplishments to account, and forthwith commenced giving lessons in fencing, dancing, and in the English language. He also speculated in old pictures, in antique pottery, in curiosities extracted from Pompeii—or of recent manufacture.

In their great desire to give Italy a fresh start in the right direction to liberty, the German professor and Spanish student found themselves in the midst of a revolution. Next they were arrested as conspirators, and escaped only on condition of immediately leaving the country. Sacrificing all their little property in order to raise funds for a voyage to America, they landed in due time in New York, poor, sick, heart-broken, and in despair.

The ever self-sacrificing elder sister, Rosana, received them all in her house as part of her family. She sent the children to school, and to the Sunday-school and church of Mr. Hildebrand. Regularly were all their little heads seen inside of Rosey's pew. She ministered not only to all their little



wants, but took good care their religious instruction should be equally well attended to.

The professor and student in time were enabled to find employment, while the little French wife was fortunate enough to procure musical scholars for all her leisure time when she was not wanted on the stage in parts for which she was well fitted. The student became a sub-editor on a Spanish paper, intended for South American circulation, and was also engaged in some way as an artist at the theatres. All public and popular people have no time for domestic duties; consequently poor Rosey had the burden of taking charge of the children while the parents were amusing an admiring and applauding crowd. Thus these Italian exiles were in a fair way of success, and even of moderate fortune, when a theatrical *impresario* from one of the South American cities came across their path, to make them the most seductive offers. It is well known there is no taste in an American audience; no ear for music, no eye for the ballét, no admiration for the fine arts, no appreciation for excellence of any kind. All foreign artists will tell you so; nor will any amount of money and applause, bouquets and benefits, induce one of them to swerve from the truth in private in this particular, whatever they may say in public on the stage—when they are acting. The American atmosphere is not favorable to the development or enjoyment of those refinements of the highest civilization, those heavenly emanations of the soul in the soaring flights of artistic genius. The American atmosphere is not redolent of those sweet scents and palate titillations which breathe of sour maccaroni, rancid oil, of grease and garlic, of kraut, spec, onions, and pickled eggs. Without these, America never can be a country of art.

Impressed with these indignant considerations, and no less



influenced by a solid deposit, with a substantial guarantee against all loss, the suffering exiles left our inhospitable shores for a more genial clime. Rosey remained once more alone in her house, to pursue her honest avocation, which she had done at all times without intermission. It was now many years since the exiles had departed, who, from all accounts, were successful beyond their most sanguine expectations.

Thus far was the minister able to instruct Mr. Chillinworth. But as to Rosey's property or means of support the worthy preacher was not as well informed. The clergyman, therefore, appealed to the green-grocer, the butcher, and the baker, for more exact information as to her estimated commercial standing in the neighborhood. From these he learned she was close, stingy, hard working, but excellent pay; "no doubt with lots of money, and good for any amount."

The worthy clergyman had fully explored all the sources of knowledge, to return well satisfied with his labors. A solitary woman in a foreign land, in the humblest walk of life, with a self-sacrificing spirit, with a heart open to every Christian virtue, and a hand ever willing to aid her fellow-creature, in humility, in peace with all, was paving her way in silence to heaven. If Emma wished to reward a good woman on earth, she need only comply with her wishes; nor need she fear ever to be guided by her counsel or example.



## CHAPTER XXII.

THE human tide, for ever ebbing or flowing in or out of New York, is one of its great peculiarities. In this especially it differs from other cities where the population is more stationary, more settled and fixed. But in the metropolis of our commerce, its people have their annual migrations, not only to adjacent villas, but run over other States, extending their flight to distant countries and other continents. Friends often part without more than the common salutation, to meet after many months have intervened, returning perhaps in opposite directions—from St. Petersburg or San Francisco, Italy or the Isthmus, Stockholm or Sandwich Islands, from Archangel or Australia. And they meet as they parted, without especial greeting, each supposing the other remained while he was absent.

Thus the metropolis makes all parts of the world tributary. From every country the sources of its prosperity flow, to extend its limits, to enhance its wealth, to increase its population, to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge. The vast ocean in sight, which sometimes sends its heaving billows to break in the Bay, is not more restless, changing, surging, and in perpetual motion, than the stream of life in the busy streets of New York. Mutation seems to be the life-blood of its existence, with arteries extending to seas and shores the most remote, thus causing events in an opposite hemisphere to vibrate upon the pulsation at home, to affect, and even influence domestic affairs.

The transition of scene, therefore, from the city in winter to the sunny climate of the tropics a few months subsequent, is but following the natural succession of incidents in the ever-shifting panorama.



On that part of the coast washed by the waves of the Mexican Gulf, or Caribbean Sea, in which charts are imperfect, with territorial boundaries uncertain and ill-defined, lies a region almost wholly unknown to commerce and geography. Here is to be found an extensive valley, hemmed in on all sides by the mountains, except on its ocean front. The opposite distant headlands, hanging in beetling cliffs over the sea, run inland in rugged heights, until uniting, they rise into a towering peak, once an active volcano, but now slumbering under a thick covering of perpetual snows.

From its sides flow down cold, crystal streams to fertilize the upper plain immediately at the base. From thence they rush over rocks, through deep ravines, and amid tangled, wild vines, to the middle plateau below, where a never-ceasing vernal climate prevails; where the clouds, driven westward by the trade-winds of the tropics, strike these highlands, and discharge their genial rains in daily showers upon the luxurious vegetation.

The copious streams from the melting snows of the *volcan*, and from the humid sea-clouds lower down, pour their united waters over the precipitous crags in miniature cataracts and mountain cascades, in their way to the level savannah of the coast, imparting some coolness to the ever-burning heats of this last and lowest belt of land. The landscape is filled with striking objects in pleasing variety, indicative of wealth, an active population, and a watchful care in the culture of the soil.

The fields of cotton, crimson in bloom or white in ripeness, the deep green of the dense sugar-cane, the Tyrian purple of the leaf and stem of the indigo plant, blend harmoniously with the graceful waving of the tall, slender rice-blades, as sun, breeze, or cloud throws its peculiar, bright or



sombre hue over them, bending like grain in harvest-time. The parochial church, with its dull, grey, massive, turreted walls, ivy-clad, with belfry inlaid with blue porcelain, shines in the sun, surrounded as it is with cedars of Lebanon draped in convolvulus vines, with their clustering, red, bell-shaped flowers. The pueblo of peon natives, with its fragile houses of cane, earthen floors, and high, thatched roofs close by, under the sheltering wing of the church, with its ministering priest, rests in quiet peace in a little forest of wide-spreading shade-trees, venerable for age, of gigantic growth.

By the light-running, cool, rippling stream, the bright villa, with walls of dazzling white, embowered in groves of orange, lime, citron, and olive, with its marble fountains and trellised roses, is seen near to the gardens or fields of the broad-leaved banana, growing among the coffee-trees, blood-red with berries clinging to their bending branches; and the long rows of pineapple vines, loaded with luscious fruit, near the thick wood, impervious to the rays of the sun, where the lowly cacao, the many-branching guava, the graceful palm and tall cocoanut trees, drink up the heavy moisture from the wet ground.

The stately *granja*, the lofty pile of solid stone buildings where the rich products are stored, where the agents and officers reside, where all business is done, rises upon its groined arches of solid masonry like some feudal castle of Gothic times, inclosed by a high, strong wall capable of resistance to all external attacks.

Such are some of the striking objects everywhere upon the plains that rise one above the other; affording as much difference, from elevation, in climate as zones of latitude. The rush of water through the *acequias*, those artificial channels



cut for irrigating, adds freshness to vegetation and vivacity to animal life. The birds of song and plumage are seen, from the deep green and red-winged parrot and the flamingo of many colors, to the honey-bee and golden humming-bird; and the clear, melodious stave of the *clarin*, the clarionet warbler, is heard, perhaps, in concert with the more familiar note of the dove, plover, meadow-lark, robin, or bobolink, and blue-bird in their southern migration.

The wide-spreading dahlia tree, its trunk a foot in circumference, with its thousand flowers in bloom; the graceful *fundio*, large and trumpet-shaped; the *gua-huom-qui*, the wild cape jasmine, with its clustering stems of overpowering fragrance; the drooping acia; the climbing morning-glory; and even the creeping verbena, afford their beauty and perfume. Nature has here lavished all her gifts in ministering to the senses, and in imparting an elastic buoyancy, an exhilarating thrill to the spirit. Wherever the eye rests is beauty; whatever is heard is full of harmony and music; each breeze comes laden with grateful odors; ripe fruits on all sides invite to luscious banquets; cool winds, with lulling waters, bring refreshing sleep in the deep silence of the night.

The rich hacienda of Santa Lucia de Acultepec yielded an immense revenue to its young proprietor. All the lands within this wide-spreading valley were his; the agricultural crops, the fruits, the precious gums, the medicinal roots, the rare oils, the herds of hoofed animals, were his. Minerals and dye-woods, sulphur from the *volcan*, saltpetre from the caves, even the snow from its crest of clouds afforded a princely income. The sea, also, paid him a lordly tribute in the red coral, the protean sponge, the light iodine, in the sparkling pearl, and no less productive pearl-shells. It was said he



exacted ransom or heavy seignioralty payments from the buccaneer, the slave-trader, and smuggler, who refitted and took shelter in the safe *ensenadas*, the roadsteads of his domain.

He lived in a style commensurate with his wealth and power. On the middle plateau, several thousand feet above the level of the ocean, his villa was situated, on the brow of the shelving descent overlooking the plain below. The grounds were laid out with a tropical taste, faintly imitated in northern climes, in those extensive conservatories or crystal palaces designed for the development of all species of fruits and plants. The garden, some acres in extent, was terraced with low walls or steps of marble, leading to the successive landings. Statues, and jets, and fountains were abundant, and little circular temples of dazzling concrete, open on all sides, resting on slender white columns, with domes vermilion or shining blue, sheltered some rare work of art in bronze or stone in the centre within. Streams of water rippled over the paved courses prepared for them, to find their way to miniature lakes with mossy banks, or to the roots of the vegetation in the beds of earth. Long circular seats of stucco, painted with bright and varied hues, and high balustrades of the same material for trailing vines, contributed a lively, pleasing effect. Fruits of the tropics and of the temperate latitudes were here seen side by side, the mamey, along with the nectarine and peach; the voluptuous chirimoya, and the most exquisite pear; the tuna, the zapote, the apricot, and apple. The mango displayed its yellow fruit in its umbrageous foliage; the pomegranate its grateful perfume, the fig its purple ripeness, and even the strawberry renewed its blossoms and fruit throughout the year.

Vines, and roses, and flowers, lent their beauty and sweet-



ness to the scene in a profusion and magnificence unknown in colder climes. The air was heavy with fragrance ; a cooling shade fell around and over all ; the heat was tempered with the spray of falling waters ; the earth humid and fruitful from the little rivulets that ran in innumerable channels.

The mansion, although only of one story, was of great extent, finished with much care, and filled with many gems and works of art. The floors were porcelain and marble, the ceilings for the most part paintings in fresco, and the high walls were covered with pictures in rich frames. The furniture was gilded, but light and cool. Some costly mats of the finest wool were laid near sofas for the feet to rest upon. Silken hammocks swung in the corridors for noonday repose. The vases, tables, pitchers, cups, and almost all other articles for food or drink, were of solid silver, sometimes in exquisite chasing, sometimes plain. The baths were of variegated porcelain, inlaid.

The barbaric and oriental splendor forming the basis of this sybarite style of living was not wanting in many of the more useful and convenient improvements of the age. Gas-pipes were to be seen throughout the establishment ; ice and snow brought from the distant *volcan*, contributed their various uses for comfort, and a thousand little articles seen everywhere denoted a careful appropriation of all novel inventions wherever found.

Two gentlemen were seated at the breakfast table in the extensive *comedor*, or dining-room, of this princely cottage, about noon. The various courses of meats, vegetables, and the dessert had been removed ; for it is only the absence of soup which distinguishes this meal from dinner. The delicious fruits and light wines were now before them ; one helped himself to the crimson pomegranate, while the other



was cutting slices from the luscious chirimoya. They sat in silence at opposite sides of the table, but apparently ill at ease.

One of them was in the prime of manhood, tall, rather slim, with dark hair, heavy but large, beautiful black eyes, regular, handsome features, a small, pretty mouth, and a slightly olive complexion. He was dressed in a suit of black of the prevailing fashion, with much attention to the lace frills and bosom of his linen. A profusion of gems was upon his hands and in his clothes. As he smiled he displayed his teeth, regular and white as sets of pearl. Much easy grace was in his unstudied manner, a noble daring in his self-reliant look, mixed slightly with a scornful levity and playful smile, denoting a man of the world who had played his part well.

Yet he was not in a happy mood. He was the guest of the gentleman opposite. Still something had gone amiss. At length, toying with a cigarette in the little silver *brasero* of coals on the table, he pushed over the vase to his companion. "Will you not smoke, *compadre*?" said he.

"Thank you, I prefer the chirimoya a little longer."

"Then, *hombre*, my man, let me hear the sound of your voice, unless you are repeating your meridian prayers."

"I think, Olivera," he replied, laying down his fruit-knife, "I think, on reflection, you will come into my views about the matter."

"I think, Señor Don Nicolas Sabina, I will never be compromised in any affair in which is a woman."

"Yet you wish me to take charge of your hacienda of Santa Inez without any requital on your part."

"If half the profits be no consideration, Don Nicolas, what more do you want? You are avaricious for money; you know how to make it, and keep it. I want you to make some for me, and take the half."



"It is a bargain, Señor Marquez, if your excellency will join me in securing the possession of the lady."

"I thought you cared only for an enormous fortune; what good, then, would a lady be to you?"

"What good, Señor Marquez, is money without you can use it?"

"Very true; but I thought your ambition was directed to fame, from your great work to be completed hereafter in Paris."

"I wish this lady, however; and by the holy virgin of Remedios, I will have her!" answered Sabina, with a scowl, as he lit his cigareta at the *brasero*.

Olivera shrugged his shoulders as he said: "That is no affair of mine."

"*Mira!* See here, Señor Marquez de las Cumbres; do you tell me you care nothing about the sex—that they are beneath your notice?"

"I love my mother and my little sisters, Don Nicolas; therefore I have a great respect for ladies."

"Then why do you not show them some attention?"

"To aid you in this abduction would certainly be manifesting marked attention," said he, with a smile on his lip.

"Are you afraid, Señor Marquez?"

"I never asked myself that question," was the answer.

"I want this girl, and you want money for your gambling purposes in Europe. Now let us help each other, and you will not be the loser."

The conversation here dropped on the entrance of a servant with small cups of strong coffee, made of the choice berries selected from the topmost branches on the estate.

Sabina was no longer the idle, listless lounge he seemed to be in New York. Here he was the keen man of business,



successful in every enterprise, daring and unscrupulous in the means. He was amassing a large fortune with which to figure some day in the capitals of Europe. If his northern associates thought him mean and stingy, here on his broad estates he was known to be grasping and avaricious. But these were the smallest of his vices. Uncontrolled by the restraints of law, or by obedience to a superior, he gave way to the gratification of his unbridled, frantic, and fiendish passions. Under the influence of any frenzy he knew no moral restraint. He was, moreover, incapable of fear as a madman.

Fernando Miguel Olivera, Marquez de las Cumbres, was his guest. His estates lay contiguous to Sabina beyond the snow-capped *volcan*, and extended to the shores of the South Sea. The hacienda of Santa Inez was not productive, although more extensive than the Santa Lucia; but it possessed all the elements of even greater wealth. The minerals were more abundant; the woods richer in dyes and ornamental timber; the pearl fisheries more numerous, and each capable of a greater yield; the crops would be equal, with the additional advantage of a soil and climate adapted to Sea Island cotton and cochineal.

But Olivera living abroad, his hacienda was neglected and running fast to decay and ruin. At this time it was wholly unproductive. He was too much engaged in his favorite, absorbing pursuit to attend to his American estate. His passion for gaming made him noted—even celebrated—in every capital on the Continent. He was famous from Oporto to Odessa, from Moscow to Paris, at every distinguished watering-place wherever play was permitted. Highly educated and accomplished, with great versatility of talent, an extensive acquaintance with men and affairs, his family one of the oldest of the Spanish nobility, he was



cordially received in the highest circles, and caressed in all. But he seemed indifferent to every pleasure or useful pursuit, to steal away to the gambling rooms, to calculate chances, and to run fearful hazards in attempting to break banks by betting against them.

Predictions were constantly made that each campaign would be his last; but all proved untrue. Although his losses were heavy, still corresponding winnings counterbalanced ill-luck. He never spoke of success or failures, but gambled on until it was believed at last he had found some infallible secret by which he must prove fortunate in time. The extent of his wealth was unknown; but it was understood the most generous actions were done by him with his money. He was not prodigal, yet open-handed, as he was true-hearted whenever his feelings were enlisted. He was a man of tried courage and unquestioned honor. His indifference to ladies and avoidance of their society were proverbial.

Sabina had formed a wrong estimate of his character, believing him a desperate, dishonorable gambler, now destitute of funds to carry on his rash operations, and coming to Santa Inez to obtain supplies. He knew Olivera had not been in America for many years when they were boys together, although Sabina was by a few months only his junior. Acting on the impression that the Marquez was bankrupt or on the verge of insolvency, without funds to resume his speculations at the banks, he used every art in his power to prolong his visit at Santa Lucia, in the hope that desperation would induce him to close with his dishonorable proposal.

When the subject was first mentioned, the Marquez listened, and Sabina thought approvingly. The details were explained and the name of the young lady given, with all the difficulties stated. It was only after all the scheme was de-



veloped that the Marquez declined to join in its accomplishment. His refusal, however, was not marked with any disapprobation of the proposal, but only with the simple negative which expressed so much, yet most politely, in the Castilian phrase, *no est conveniente*—it is not convenient.

Sabina would not on his part entertain the proposition to take charge of the hacienda of Santa Inez until the Marquez should consent to aid him in the abduction. Hence Olivera was vexed. But Sabina did not despair, and in his headlong passion he believed the Marquez was waiting for more tempting terms. Perhaps the Marquez flattered himself that Sabina would give up the proposal when he found it idle to hope for his assistance, and that, in his grasping spirit for wealth, he would take the control of the Santa Inez. Thus reasoning on both sides, the visit was prolonged, although the Marquez had now been a fortnight at the villa.

No society was found by the noblemen on the Hacienda. Sabina lived alone, with his household retinue of servants. It is true an extensive library was collected of choice French, with curious Latin and interesting Spanish works, in which Olivera spent much of his time. He could hold no social intercourse with the agents and clerks on the estate. Even the *administradores* at the *granjas* were not deemed fit associates for the nobleman, although these men were educated, and possessing much varied, valuable local information. But such are the prejudices of caste, that a Spanish gentleman cannot spend an hour in social equality with one below that rank, however worthy and interesting he may be.

Yet the Spanish gentleman loves gossip. His long hours of idleness foster its growth. With almost all of them it is a passion. Now, when the Marquez travelled, he moved in a state befitting his rank and comfort. He had at least a



half-dozen of attendants in this rugged country, where all journeys are performed on horseback. He therefore had his *arriero* to take charge of his animals; a *mozo* as a deputy-equerry, to help him; a *criado* or steward for his moving household to assist the cook, and no less than two valets to wait upon his person, to minister to his wants. One of these valets, by name Domingo, had much of his confidence, or at least much of his attention; for Domingo was everywhere, soon made himself known to everybody, and was immediately versed in all the local news.

Domingo not only wore the cast off garments of the Marquez with peculiar grace, but tried his best to assume the manners and even imitate the expressions and gestures of his master. His obsequious bow, and the flourish with which he elevated his *sombrero* from his head, were very attractive, not only to the *caballeros* on the hacienda, but had its magical effect on the *señoras* and other *doncellas*. He had a compliment for every *don* whom he met, and a word of flattery for every *señorita*. He ingratiated himself rapidly in their affections, and their unlimited confidence, with cakes and *dulces*, soon followed.

It was soon apparent in this smiling, charming valley all was not happiness and contentment. *El amo*, that is to say, the proprietor, was hateful; he was viewed in horror; he was known to be in communication with evil spirits, if not one of the number himself, which was not deemed improbable. This was no secret among them; but whether it was or not, they believed *el amo* knew their opinion, and would know it anyhow without their aid or revelation.

Sabina was aware of their superstitious credulity, and had used every art to work upon their fears. He had mystified them with ventriloquism and magic-tricks of legerdemain,



chemistry, and other sciences, until in their ignorance they believed him more than mortal, and much worse. His own natural temper, when let loose in its fury among them, had contributed in addition to his studied artifices. The legends respecting his father, many of them true, and all partly founded on fact, gave him a fit pedigree, if scenes of violence, rapine, plunder, and blood could be quartered on his family escutcheon.

---

### CHAPTER XXIII.

DOMINGO, the servant of the Marquez, did not find time hanging heavily on his hands. Ennui was not an affliction of his master, nor could the valet catch that fashionable infection in the second-hand suits that fell to him without quarantine. His own habits forbade idleness, or that which he would consider as such. Domingo did not intend to waste his sweetness on the desert air of the villa. Formed for society, which he made his proper element, he humbly imagined he dazzled, not only with his own resplendent fascinations, but also with the borrowed lustre of the Marquez, to adorn and enlighten all upon whom his splendor might fall.

Domingo had a weakness for the softer sex, a longing after the charms of feminine converse, a leaning towards those gentler topics which formed the current staple of their innocent thoughts. Select reunions were especially appointed for his delight; sometimes more numerous gatherings were improvised, where he would accidentally drop in to pass away a pleasant hour. One of these little *tertulias*, or reunions,



happened on an afternoon, at the house of a merchant whose *tienda* supplied two *granjas* and their peons with all the comforts and superfluities of foreign commerce. The mother and a pretty daughter did the honors to the young wife of an *administrador*, to two sisters and a niece of the *cura*, a neighboring priest, to the daughters and aunt of an *empleado*, a chief clerk, and a charming girl, said to be a niece of the *escribano* or notary. They met in a large, prettily furnished room, facing the *huerta chica* or garden of shrubbery and flowers, close up to the windows, and were busy with their needles when Don Domingo, as they were pleased to call him, honored them with his presence.

Don Domingo bowed low on his entrance, while his *sombrero* in hand touched the vermilion paint on the broad, tiled floor. He regained his vertical position to gracefully embrace in turn all the fair creatures then and there assembled, and as his chivalric arms encircled respectfully their fair forms with much ease and grace, he impressed a chaste salutation on the foreheads of the elder, and perhaps imprinted a little warmer touch of his lips to the blooming cheeks of those younger. Each one of the fair ones dropped into her seat as soon as her part of the performance was ended, to resume her needle-work.

The gallant *caballero* helped himself to a *cigaretta*, which he lighted at the *brasero* on the table, threw back his short cloak on his shoulders, laid down his *sombrero*, and finally took a seat. The ladies felt themselves in the presence of nobility. The courtly gentleman complimented each of them in a few choice sentences, that elsewhere might have been deemed a little studied, and correspondingly stiff and formal, but which in this choice circle were viewed as the stately grandeur of style bordering on the sublime. He seized a



lute or haraba harp, and, after one or two touching preludes, played sweetly a sonata, then telling where he had first heard it performed by a fascinating beauty of Andalusia much resembling in features one present. With every little canzonet or other piece of music he had a similar word of flattery for some one. When he talked of painting, the matrons of the party found their sweet faces smiling on canvas in oils, in famous galleries, resplendent with silks and gems, rejoicing in the names of celebrated saints.

It would have been impossible for them to enjoy such seraphic happiness in silence. Their hearts were overflowing in the natural desire to contribute a part to this pleasing entertainment. But what could they say interesting and attractive to the Señor Hidalgo before them? Wealth and fashion were worlds unknown; titles and rank were beyond the range of their sphere. They knew nothing, no one to talk of, unless it might be the *patron* of Santa Lucia, while of him they could not talk as of a mortal. He was something superhuman, at the sound of whose name the blood ran cold through the veins, as always happens when a spirit is present.

But the *caballero* wished them to talk of the Don, and thus encouraged, after each invoking the protection of her patron saint, they ventured to tell of the *maldito*, the accursed. Worse than his father, he had not even as a boy been baptized. He never took his first communion, nor solicited masses for his father, who needed them for his deadly sins. He was not seen inside of a church in his life, while every crucifix in the villa was broken or thrown down! When he met the *Dios* borne by the *curas* in procession, to administer the last sacrament to a dying sinner, he neither kneeled down, nor even uncovered. He was sold body and soul to



an evil demon, who would not permit him to confess or bow before the Virgin.

When he grew up he was worse, *mucho peor*—much worse. Then he could invoke *demonios*, who came, and talked, and howled; animals would speak, and birds sing songs full of blasphemy. He went at night to the *Laguna*, where the serpent with wings has its cave, to talk to it and feed it with fruit and wine. Was he not there, and his head a ball of fire? *Como no?* Why not? Is he not burning now like sulphur, until he lights candles with his fingers? *Como no?* Why not? *Madre de Dios*, mother of God, save us! He can make lightning. *Como no?* The villa is haunted, and evil spirits yell and scream, and cry all night long around it. *Como no?* *I-e-sus* help us!

“But she came at last to live with him, the *bruha*—the witch. *Como no?* *I-e-sus!* May the *espiritu santo* watch over us! Yes, the *bruha* herself, the woman of the *demonio*, to whom he had sold himself for the vial of green blood, the charm to call spirits. She came to live in the deserted convent of *El Retiro*, and to make him hate the good more and more. She was in a rage, and you could hear her screams at the *Barranca Ancha*. *Como no?* She was young and beautiful, lovely as the Virgin of Ocotlan, large eyes of blue, with golden hair; but she could not talk in our *idioma*. She mourned, and wept, and tore her tresses, until Don Nicolas promised all, and drank some of the green blood as an oath. *Como no?*

“Yes, she was beautiful, *hermosissima*, most lovely; beautiful as the *madre de Dios*, the Virgin of Ocotlan. *Como no?* He promised her all, everything. *I-e-sus!* Then the rains failed, as the *bruha* wished. There was no fruit for the children, no *maiz* to eat, no roses for the images of the



saints at *fiestas* and *fñunciones*—at festivals and celebrations. *Como no?* The fowls died, the pigeons flew away. Tarantulas as large as your hand, the big, black, hairy, venomous spiders, ran on the walls and corners; *millipedes*—the centipedes, a foot long, were thick upon the floor; *alicranes*—scorpions, dropped from the roofs into your shoes, and clothes, and bosom, and hair. *Como no?*

“Children died for want of food, with no sweet flowers for grave-pillows at their little heads, for garlands over their innocent bodies, for spiral wreaths round their little legs and feet at their burial. *Como no?* Men and women died, too, for the want of herbs and roots as *remedios*. The images of the saints wept in the chapels; the *madre de Dios* shed tears on the altar. *I-e-sus!* *Como no?*

“Then the *bruha*, with her large eyes of blue and golden hair, beautiful as the Virgin of Ocotlan, laughed aloud, she screamed with delight; talked the *idioma* like an *evangelista*. *Como no?* Don Nicolas sent over the high *cumbre* beyond the *volcan* to the pueblo of Tehuan-cingo for some servants for her. They did not know over there, where they are all *infelices*, poor people, that this lady was a *bruha*. *Como no?* Dolores came, and she is a good girl; the *cura* told her to come to wait upon the *bruha*. Poor Lulu was enchanted by the witch before she could say either *ave* or *credo*; then it was too late. When poor Lulu heard all, she could not leave the *bruha*, because she was under magic. *Como no?*

“But Lulu, *pobracita*—poor little thing, would not believe she dealt in necromancy. So she gave her a cross to try her, but all she could do the *bruha* would not kneel down before it. *I-e-sus!* *Como no?* Then Lulu, *pobracita*, supposing that the cross was not rich enough, being only of black *ebano* wood—of ebony, gave her an image of the *madre y niño*—



mother and child. But no. She would not worship that. Lulu, poor thing, prayed, and wept, and fasted all night for the soul of the *perdida*—the lost one. When the *bruha* was asleep, Lulu stole quietly to the bed and kissed her to know if she were awake, and then softly put the cross round her neck to keep away evil spirits. *Como no? Madre de Dios!*

“When the lady awoke in the morning, and found the cross on her bosom, the tears came in her eyes as she kissed Lulu, and said she was a good child. She then promised to wear it for the sake of Lulu. *Como no?* Since then we have plenty of rains, with fruit and corn, flowers and roses. *Como no?* Poor Lulu went home when her father was ill, and sent her sister Merced, who is now at *El Retiro*. *Como no?*”

This was the substance of the narrative which the ladies poured into the listening ear of the caballero. Sometimes speaking in duet or trios, or in full chorus, sometimes in solo, but always in accord as to the veracious recital, well interlarded with expletives, exclamations, and action, in that beautiful Castilian language in which every vowel is sounded distinctly. Poor Domingo felt at times when they all came at him in full cry as if he were the accursed Don Nicolas, or the other respectable old gentleman who furnished from his apothecary's shop that precious green liquid. He sometimes compared himself to Don Ricardo in a drama called Eduardo, or the Hunchback, said to be borrowed from English history, where a duke kills two little princes in a high tower, as he has not the strength in a withered arm to throw them over the battlements. A whole graveyard of ghosts visits Don Ricardo, sleeping in his tent on the eve of a battle, and give him some spiritual manifestations, one



after the other, in which curses are served up fresh and hot from the brimstone laboratory. Domingo had learned the facts were true as related by William Shakspeare the historian. Then again, the hidalgo figured to himself the feelings of Don Juan Tenorio in the play where a bevy of frail beauties from the land of spirits preach to him a sermon on some of their mutual follies.

Domingo thanked the ladies for their interesting information, professing a full concurrence in their opinions of the *maldito* Don Nicolas, promising not to repeat what everybody kept as a profound secret. He soon took leave with his usual urbanity and courteous politeness, to learn further of this recluse at the deserted convent of El Retiro.

The next day the elegant and polished Domingo found his way to one of the large villages of peons, called the pueblo of Huepan. He only stopped apparently to eat a *chirimoya*, while his *mozo* watered the horses at a neighboring brook. He took a seat on a hewn block of stone, in front of the *Juzgado*, as it was called, the *cabildo* or municipal house, under the pleasant shade of a wide-spreading amates, a species of the magnolia tree that grew on the *plaza*. The *Juzgado* was a one-story, one-room building of adobe, with a palm-thatched roof, without a floor or much rude furniture. The *alcaldes*, judges, syndics, and even *topilles*, were within in full council. Two or three *alcaldes* from neighboring pueblos were also in attendance; for Huepan was the *cabecera*—the head pueblo, which selected the magistrates for several smaller suburban communities; while the *cabecera* elected its own by the free and enlightened suffrages of its solid men.

The *caballero* could hear the discussion in council, which related to the revenue derived from tolls established at the



ford; and it being a question of finance, the current coin, tlacos, quartillas, medios, reales, and pesetas, were the words most often repeated. The tlaco being the only copper coin, was the initial rate by which the others were adjusted; the quartilla was a silver quarter of a real; a medio, the one-half of the same, while the real itself was the eighth of a dollar, and a peseta a double real, all of which silver pieces find their way over the world in commerce. It struck the hidalgo's capacious intellect that funds were low in the exchequer of the *cabecera*, for the alcalde put a decided veto on an appropriation for more musical instruments wanted by the barefooted community on the other side of the river. Now a band is indispensable for religious processions or for other festivities, and is an institution of prime necessity and respectability. Without it, in the estimation of natives a pueblo is a very poor affair, soon to degenerate into a mean hamlet, a *congregacion* or *comunidad*. The *cabecera* was famous for its extensive orchestra, consisting of three violins, a guitar-harp, a triangle, and a big drum.

The barefooted magistrate from the disappointed pueblo left the council in high displeasure, when the sitting dissolved. On coming out he recognised Domingo as an acquaintance to whom he could express his indignation, while the other counsellors dispersed to their various homes.

The alcalde extended his wrath to a circle large enough to embrace all officials wherever flourishing. In giving vent to his feelings he found great relief to his mind. The diplomatic Don Domingo gradually brought him to say something of Don Nicolas in strict confidence. But the alcalde was cautious. He would not commit himself, as he had some reminiscences fresh in his memory which taught him the danger of exciting the vengeance of that dreaded individual. The



Macchiavellian valet, however, with soothing speeches, prettily turned compliments, and seductive flattery, wormed himself into the coarse cotton-shirted bosom of the peon magistrate.

It was no great risk in this official to tell what was well known, and to that extent he could go. He confirmed all the ladies said the day before, and went further into details. That Don Nicolas was a wizard, a *maldito*, dealing with evil spirits, no one would deny. “*Todo el mundo*, everybody knew it. But he kept the *demonios* to himself, which did not trouble *fieles*, true believers, before the *bruha* came to live at the deserted convent of El Retiro. But then he had more power over evil spirits. He sold himself body and soul to her, for she was beautiful, more beautiful than the Virgin of Ocotlan. She came one night, no one knew where from: out of the sulphur of the *volcan*, or out of the deep abyss behind the convent, where the black water roars as it falls over the cataracts in the inaccessible cañada of Esquiletos, or out of the sea, where that fiend, that familiar of Don Nicolas, the *Cabeza Negra*, the Black Head found her. This complimentary title was the common appellation of the sabre-cut sailing master of the yacht Chula.

“When the *bruha* came, Don Nicolas spent most of his time up there, on the side of the mountain at the convent with the deep cañada behind it, and Barranca Ancha—the broad Barranca in front. But then he became the *maldito*, the accursed. Then he vented his rage on all who offended him. A *carbonero* was smothered by demons in his coal-pit among the pine trees—*como no*? A *milpero*—a corn-planting peon, was pushed from a rock and killed, *como no*? A *vaquero*, a herdsman, was attacked by a bull in which the evil spirit entered and gored him to death—*como no*?

“When the cotton was in blossom, the *gusanos*—the army



worms destroyed half of it; a violent Norther beat down the other part, and the rain-storm spoilt it. The same *Norte* prostrated the banana stocks, and all the fruit was gone—*como no?* The caterpillars covered the fig and olive trees, because there was no rain—*como no?* The *chapulin*—the grass-hopper locusts came in clouds to darken the sun, and eat up all the *maiz* and sugar-cane—*como no?* He was mad at the peons of Ochitlan, and sent at night an *aguacero* to burst over the pueblo, to wash away the houses, orange and citron trees, and corals, to drown the men, women and children, carried down the valley in the flood in the dark, crying for help—*como no?* An *arroyo seco*, a dry river bed, made by the *aguacero*, full of large stones, gravel and sand, and a wooden cross, now are at the place where the plaza of the old pueblo was. *Como no?*

“Then the *maldito* was satisfied; the people poor and starved; half the children in their little graves; all the mothers in mourning. The Cabeza Negra grinned from ear to ear; the cut in his cheek opened when he laughed; his blind eye sparkled like a piece of burning charcoal; his earrings were red-hot. Then they went to sea, only the two, no more, to dig up buried treasure on the beach, marked by the bleached bones of the *negro* killed by the Cabeza at the spot, for his *espíritu*, to sit all night long and watch the *cofre*, till they come for it—*como no?* Now they have come back. What next?”

Don Domingo listened with amazement to this recital. He implicitly believed all the supernatural part of the story; for his early education, carefully attended to in this particular, taught him to listen to such revelations with unbounded reverence. His venerable mamma was in his youth a *lavandera*—a washerwoman of Balboa, who could always



keep him from blowing soap bubbles with a pipe, when she or some of her neighbors narrated things marvellous. His lower jaw fell, as the alcalde proceeded; his fierce moustache lost its curl; his sword-hilt came in contact with the ground, and his shoulders inclined downward. In a word, the brave hidalgo felt that in his aspirations after exalted society of rank, and even nobility, he had reached a point above mortals, where he was in daily association with disembodied spirits to be damned at last. How did he know but Don Nicolas, like his favorite Don Juan in the play, would in one of his freaks ask all the statuary at the villa to step out to take a cup of chocolate? Only think of the tramp, tramp of their stone feet over the porcelain floors; their marble arms cracking when extended to the fragile cup, and the cup crushing in the cold grasp of chiselled petrification. A shivering thrill ran through his veins. He was an injured fellow. The Marquez had wronged him in this perilous journey. He would have double wages or quit.

Domingo resolved that he would listen no more to these legends. He had enough of them, as he felt for the chain round his neck, to which a little gold cross was attached. And he run his fingers into his pocket for his sacred charm. Finding his spiritual battery all right, he regained some courage as he returned to the villa of Santa Lucia. But poor Domingo could not keep his resolution; he could not keep his head under the bed-clothes of ignorance. He must put his nose out occasionally to breathe his proper element in ladies' society. A few days thereafter his knowledge was further extended.

Don Nicolas had expressed some slight displeasure at the refractory peons of the pueblo of Acatala. He had his eye upon them and it was at all times an evil eye, against which



no amulet was of any power. He went down in the evening to a *granja*, from which this pueblo was a half league distant, where its peons worked when their services were wanted. At breakfast next day, before noon, a *mandon* desired to speak to him. He was ordered to come in, when this peon, a head workman, a *mandon* of sugar-cane cutters, entered.

He bowed low in the deepest humility, until his uncovered head almost touched the brick floor, and remained in that posture. "Rise and speak, hombre," said Sabina, in a gentle tone, whereupon the humble peon stood up.

"Do you wish to speak to me?"

"Yes, *señor amo*."

"What do you want?"

"The peons of *Acatula* will not work, *señor amo*."

"Then have their *alcalde* make them."

"It is the *fiesta* of San Martin, their *patron*, *señor amo*."

"You can go," said Sabina, pointing to the door, and the humble *mandon* quietly quit the room.

The feast-day of the patron-saint of a pueblo is a high festival of the peons. It is the great day in their calendar. It is looked forward to as a day of much festivity, of great pleasure and amusements. High Mass is celebrated in the morning, then the procession forms and the colossal wooden image of the saint is borne on the stout shoulders of men through the street, under arches and arbors of roses and flowery festoons to the sound of music, with the priests singing hymns, the boys swinging censers, bearing lighted candles and reading prayers. The *funcion* being ended, the rest of the day is devoted to feasting, music, dancing, drinking, and gambling.

The young men are dressed out in new cotton *camisas* and *calzoncillos*, and red silk sashes. The girls put their silk stock-



ings, with satin slippers, on their little feet, then place graceful gossamer *robosas* over their shoulders, and, with wreaths of flowers in their hair, are sporting all the finery of their limited wardrobes. Stands are seen for fruits, for cakes, for liquors, and for lemon-water ices, under mat awnings everywhere, and everybody comes to share in the fascinating excitement.

In the height of the festivity a rumor is heard that Don Nicolas was coming. The girls and boys stop the dance to listen to the report. The music is hushed. Some say it is true; others say it is not. Then they all hasten to the *plaza* for more news, with anxious looks. The whole population is soon assembled on that spot, when the venerable *cura* is seen to leave the church, and approach Don Nicolas and the *Cabeza Negra* riding into the town on horseback. They talk for a moment, when Sabina sinks the spurs into his horse's flanks, and the old priest is thrown violently to the ground in escaping the animal's hoofs.

The *alcalde* next approaches, hat in hand; but Don Nicolas waves him off, and, swinging round the long lash of his short-handled whip, cuts the magistrate on the cheek with the silken end. A young syndic rushes forward to implore his mercy, when Sabina, possibly mistaking his object, draws his pistol and shoots him through the body. A loud, moaning cry is raised by the whole multitude, as they rush, panic-stricken, for refuge to the church altar. But Don Nicolas is before them, and heads them off.

The crowd was swayed for a moment to and fro like a wave of the sea, which ended in a precipitate flight into the opposite *juzgado*. They all rushed, regardless of the limited space in which they would soon be found. Sabina and the Cabeza sat motionless on their horses until the last peon,



woman, and child entered and closed the door. Don Nicolas dismounted and ordered them to come out one by one. But no response was made. After a moment's pause, he went to the small aperture which served for a window, and repeated a similar order. But from the silence within no reply was given.

Seizing a burning brand, he hurled it on a thatched roof close by, and instantly the house made of cane was in flames. As the smoke was perceived by the peons a heart-rending cry was raised, for an infant was sleeping there, the first-born of a young mother who had been forced by the rushing crowd into the *juzgado*. But she was too far from the door to come forth, so that, in her frantic agony, she fainted with grief and terror. Another house was soon in flames, but the panic-stricken natives seemed incapable of action.

He again approached the window and threatened to fire, with his pistol in hand, unless they came forth. At the next instant he sent a ball into the dense mass of human beings, from whence a loud, prolonged cry of despair went up to heaven, imploring aid. Again Sabina ordered them to open the door, as another house was in a sheet of flame. Slowly the bolt was withdrawn, the door opened, and as an aged peon stepped out, Sabina gave him a blow over the head with the butt-end of his loaded whip, which felled the poor creature to the ground, with his skull broken.

Next followed a woman, whom he struck on the shoulder with his pistol, and her arm was paralysed at her side as she sank to her knees; then rising slowly, moved away. Scanning all closely as they made their exit one by one, he suffered some to pass, while others received marks of gross indignity or violence. The *alcalde* was shot down with a ball through his brain. A young wife, soon to become a mother, he kicked



in the side, when she fell, to be carried away speechless. A widow came out with a little boy, about four years old, holding her hand. He trotted along at her side, gathering up his little shirt, when his tiny, bare legs being exposed, the silk lash fell upon one of them, below the knee, bringing the blood like the gash of a knife. He turned his innocent head over his shoulder to look back at Sabina, without stopping, while the big tears, in his agony, were rolling down his flushed cheeks, as he exclaimed: "Mamma, mamma, the *colotli*, the *colotli*—the scorpion—has bit me!"

The mother seized the afflicted limb and applied her lips to the wound. Perceiving it was the cut of a whip, she turned her weeping eyes in thankfulness to heaven, that it was only the scourge of a tyrant, and not the venomous sting of the reptile. Poor creature! how afflicted, when the lacerating lash is viewed as a boon or lesser evil.

The *plaza* was now deserted. All the houses on the square were in flames. The first building, where the infant had been sleeping, was sunk into one mass of burning coals. Other houses were igniting in the lanes, and the smoke was rolling in clouds above and around.

Sabina lit a *cigaretta* by the glowing embers, mounted his horse, and rode leisurely away with the *Cabeza Negra*. The pueblo was a ruin, the church roof had not escaped, and the beams and blazing rafters fell upon the high altar, where the images were consumed and the sacred vessels destroyed. The inhabitants left during the night. When Domingo visited the pueblo in the morning, all was silent, with a thick smoke rising from the smouldering ashes.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

THE Marquez has gone to the mountains; the Marquez has gone a hunting, with only his cook and arriero as attendants. Don Nicolas had insinuated he was going in search of *guacas*, and Olivera had not denied it. Don Nicolas hoped he would be fortunate in finding rich *thmostli*, tombs, and the Marquez thanked him for his good wishes at starting. But for all that Sabina believed the Marquez would not find treasure; that he would come back soon to accept his proposal.

When the nobleman was a boy, living with his parents on the hacienda of Santa Inez, before the revolution forced them to quit for Spain, he was a great favorite of a young country priest, a *cura*, who had been successful in the search for *thmostli*. This *padre* knew where to look for *guacas*, the consecrated burial-grounds of the ancient people, who centuries ago inhabited the country. He could soon detect the signs that led to a *thmostli*, an isolated, low, dome-covered tomb of pyramidal structure, within of stone and cement, in which reposed the remains of their great men, now imbedded in the vines, mosses, and other dense vegetation.

The Marquez often found pleasure in accompanying the *padre* in his excursions, and in a short time was as expert in woodcraft as the *cura* himself. Hunting, therefore, was only a branch of his sylvan education. He became an antiquarian, skilled in *teocalli*, pottery, stone images, hieroglyphs, and tumuli. He was daring in the exploration of caverns, in climbing the shelving sides of *cañadas*, descending into the abyss of profound *barrancas* and swimming mountain *arroyos*. He had been absent for many years, and on his return now the *cura* was gone from the hacienda.



Olivera disdained shooting rabbits, which were to be found under every bush in the open glades; nor did he notice the quail with its top-knot of feathers, nor the silver partridge, nor the golden pheasant, nor the wild turkey. *Gangas*, the yellow-legged plover, with ortolans, too, were abundant in the marshes, and wild duck in immense flocks. But these had no sporting charms for him. He had gone to the mountains to hunt the *venado*, the large red deer, up among the pine forests.

He had taken up his quarters with the *carboneros* at their coal-pits, and he was on the path the peons follow descending from the *volcan*, with loads of ice packed in grass on their shoulders. He had wandered to the further side of the snow mountain, where the waters flow down to the South Sea. He was beyond the boundaries of the hacienda of Santa Lucia. In that lonely, desolate, dreary region, the Marquez fabricated a story and frightened his attendants by informing them that, while asleep at midnight near to a coal-pit, he was attacked by a *citlatli*, a *vampiro*, with wings extending two feet across. This long-nebbed animal, once believed to be fabulous, is only too well known to the poor peons under various names in their many dialects.

In the morning the nobleman—still feigning to suffer—assured them one of his legs was almost powerless, with great languor over his whole frame from loss of blood. He resolved, therefore, to fly without delay; for it is known the vampire renews its attack nightly on the same victim once seized upon; pursuing his track for many leagues with every change of locality, until it drinks the last drop which will flow from the wound. The Marquez seemed with difficulty to sit his mule, but said he would endure the pain to hasten down into the deep valleys, where some sheltering



*pueblo* would keep off the winged messenger of death, which dreads the vicinity of squalling cats and barking dogs.

He was fortunate in reaching the *pueblo* of *Tehuac-ingo* before nightfall, to find shelter in the only house vacant or fit for him—the gloomy *juzgado*, with its black mud walls and earthen floor. The poor people of the village, with that sympathy for suffering which renders tropical inhabitants at all times so hospitable, sent their simple remedies for the imaginary wound. His remaining a day with them was an unheard of honor. No white person ever passes twenty-four hours in a *pueblo* of natives. It was forbidden by law under the Spanish government, and now custom has taken the place of the positive edict to keep the two races distinct.

But the Marquez could not move further, according to his own account, from pain and exhaustion. On the second day he succeeded in limping to a cane-house of one of the peons, to repose in a hammock, as it was refreshingly cool and pleasant. He gently swung himself to and fro while reading, and permitted the simple, kind women of the household to attend to their avocations, without demanding any of their service.

They had all left the building during the day for the mountain stream which ran by the *pueblo*; all had gone to bring water in large earthen jars balanced gracefully on their heads; all were absent except a maiden who sat sewing in a distant corner of one of the apartments separated by an open cane partition. The Marquez laid down his book, as he exclaimed, “Lulu, Lulu.” The maiden raised her head from her work, and listened. “Lulu, Lulu, come here,” cried the Marquez. She hastened to his relief to find him, to her surprise, in a sitting posture with both feet upon the ground.

As she stood before him in amazement, he cast upon her a



beaming smile, such as the maiden might suppose a pitying angel would shed upon a dying infant. "Lulu, Lulu, you are a good girl; I have come only to this *pueblo*, only to see you. Remember the poor lady at the Retiro; and be still, be cautious, be a good girl. Listen! To-night, after midnight prayer, I will come for you, and you will tell me all. But not a word of this to any one. Remember," he added, as he dropped a diamond ring into her hand.

"But, Señor, your wound—you cannot walk!"

The Marquez leisurely rose and moved to the door. Looking out for a moment to see if any one approached, he turned, and shaking his forefinger before his eyes as a negative to her remark, said, "No, no, Lulu. I was not touched by a *citlatli*, vampire. I am well. That is all *engaño*—a sham." He seated himself on the swinging hammock, and asked: "Where is your bed, Lulu?" She pointed to one in a distant room in a corner. "Tis well," said he. "Now go and remember."

The illustrious invalid was reposing in a languid mood when the women returned with water. He sent for his servants, and retired, leaning on the arm of the *arriero*, in much evident pain, which elicited the pitying commiseration of the kind household. Not long after *oracion*, the hour of vespers, the moon appeared in all her bright splendor. Before midnight the *pueblo* was in the quiet repose of deep slumber.

The Marquez rose from his couch, and seizing the hat and *serape*—the crimson-striped blanket of his *arriero*, left the building.

He stood at the door for a moment to listen and observe the course of the shadows cast by the gigantic *parota* trees. Then stealing softly along under their wide-spreading branches, he reached the house of Lulu. He carefully exa-



mined the corner which he supposed was her bed-chamber within, before he inserted his hand through the reeds that formed the outer wall. Seizing her little foot, he pressed it till she awoke. Her ear was immediately applied to the canes, as she asked who was there.

"Come, Lulu, it is the hour," said the Marquez, in a whisper, and walked away to the shade of a tree.

Soon after, the maiden moved like a meteor past the house in the direction the Marquez had taken. As she stood in the bright moonlight at his side, with her slight drapery, for her night garments could scarce be called clothing, with her long glossy hair streaming down her back, and her little feet glancing in small slippers, the nobleman thought he had never beheld a more beautiful little creature. "Lulu, you are a good girl," said he, putting his arm round her waist and kissing her. The maiden submitted in silence to his caress, and they walked up the street under the shadows to a high cross at the end, where a large circular seat, called a *glorieta*, of cement in variegated colors, which often afforded a resting-place for the inhabitants on a pleasant evening.

When they were seated in one corner, under the shade of a neighboring tree, Lulu told him the sad history of the lady. She had been seized in a public thoroughfare of a large city in some far-off country, forced into a carriage, and put on shipboard, with sails all set, before the sun went down. Unable to escape, and incapable of transmitting intelligence to her relatives, she had confided all to Dolores. She had given her a package of letters to send, if ever an opportunity should offer, which seemed to her hopeless. Lulu had them now at home and would give them to the Marquez. Then she told him of the lady's avocations day by day, and the indignities suffered at the hands of Sabina. In his fiendish



policy he boasted to his victim he had cut off all hope of her parents ever making search for her. He had succeeded in placing in their hands a number of letters, apparently written to her by a lover, ingeniously worded, so as to convey the impression that they formed a portion of correspondence of answers to her letters, proving the elopement voluntary on her part and long meditated.

Lulu shed copious tears while she told all, and described the inaccessible position of the convent, except at the bridge over the *Barranca Ancha*. Time flew away in their forgetfulness of the hour, and Lulu was startled when, looking up to the heavens, she saw the constellation of the southern or muleteer's cross declining to the horizon in the South-west, indicative of approaching day. She could not again meet the Marquez at night, without being observed. She would have no opportunity to see him alone at her house. In her perplexity she sprang from the seat, exclaiming, "Meet me at the *alberca*," and, like a flash, her pretty form was lost among the trees.

The mountain stream near the *pueblo* comes down from the snow-drifts of the *volcan*. In its descent the waters lose some of their frigid temperature, but at the village their channel was enlarged to a deep swift current. Its banks were fringed at places with moss-covered rocks, where it ran in rapids; but again at the silent pools tall trees, free of branches beneath, grass lawns interspersed with flowers and wild vines, formed a glade, in which the eye could penetrate through the cool shaded grove to a great distance.

The attractive beauty of the little river was the dazzling white granite debris, intermixed with the deceptive mica reflected from its bed and borders, or collected where the eddies had made a deposit. On first sight the illusion was



almost perfect that the stream was rich in precious dust, for its waters rolled apparently over golden sands. At a point where the sylvan scene was most enchanting, at the foot of some small rapids, the current was sluggish, gradually increasing in depth to the centre. Here was the favorite resort for bathing; and in the evening, before sundown, here the village maidens were to be seen in this, the *alberca*.

Divesting themselves of their light drapery, they would wade or plunge into the refreshing element, and swim to the opposite shore, not more than twenty yards distant. Collecting in groups upon the golden sands, or sitting on mossy rocks, or sporting in the pool, they resembled one of those classic tableaux the ancient poets graphically portray, no doubt drawn from life. These children of the sun, descendants of half-civilized communities, for centuries extinct before the conquest, had all the native grace, beauty of form, and seductive tones which are to be found in their highest development in the warm latitudes. They were of a blood unmixed with the Spanish race. But, with the introduction of Christianity from Europe, came also another strange people from the further Indies, the Chinese. These migratory Mongols came in the galleons from Manilla, and also in vessels of their own, to spread themselves along the coast-range of the South Sea, in search of new regions for rice fields. With these the natives mingled, creating a new type of loveliness, by adding the white skin and almond-shaped eye to the native charms, thus reproducing the classic, ideal beauty of the Grecian Isles in the tropical climate of the western hemisphere. It is from this alliance of the Aztec with the Asiatic that these *pueblo* natives have derived that white, light olive hue of color which sometimes erroneously claims for them kindred with Caucasian origin.



How many more reflections the Marquez might have made upon the beautiful forms before him is uncertain, as he sat the next evening behind a mossy bank, a few paces down the stream. But Lulu had been anxiously awaiting him at the *alberca*, and as she stood on the golden sands, looking around, she espied a wave of his hand. Plunging into the stream, she floated down the crystal current, until she found herself in the deep, clear water, close at his feet, shut out from view of the other maidens at the *alberca*.

"I thought you would come here, señor," said she, modestly.

"Thank you, Lulucita, for your kindness. But when will you give me the package of letters?"

"They are here, señor."

"Not in the water, *niña*, surely," said he, looking down in the limpid element, where her pretty, shining form was visible.

"No, not in my hands, señor," raising her arms; "but under the stone beneath yon *huehuate* tree, where you can see them."

"Is this all you have to say to me, dear Lulu, before we part?"

"It is all," said the maiden, with a tear and blush mantling her cheek, as she thought how tender her feelings had become to the handsome nobleman.

"Then remember, Lulucita *mia*, you must come when I send for you. *Adios hasta luego!*"

"Yes, yes; I will come night or day," said she, eagerly, sinking under the water to hide her emotion, nor did she rise to the surface again until he was gone.

The Marquez once more returned to the *carboneros* among the mountains. His course was not taken back to Santa Lu-



cia, but, turning off before arriving at the highest ridge, he followed a path leading to the right, which ran to valleys having but little communication with the hacienda. He slept the first night in the hut of a *carbonero*, and left early in the morning, while a thick frost whitened the grass. On reaching the summit the sun was up, when the exhalations from the low grounds and deep valleys had risen like a curtain, to shut out his view below. But one of those unusual scenes was before him, never witnessed except by those standing at early dawn on high mountains. The vapors obscured all terrestrial objects beneath, but the sun shone down upon them, rising at his feet, producing all the dark and brilliant hues of light ever seen in the heavens, and making the illusion similar in every part of outline and detail to an Arctic scene of an immense glassy sea, in which floated huge icebergs of every size, shape, and form, in all their gorgeous colors, with the peaks of mountains, far down, penetrating the fleecy mist, as green islands in this resplendent ocean of clouds.

The Marquez often before, when a youth, had seen this beautiful illusion, and it now filled his soul with delight, bringing back vivid reminiscences of happy boyhood. He stood gazing in rapture on this fleeting panorama, until the mists, rising to his own position, excluded all objects around in a dense fog. It was then only he remembered he was ignorant of his elevation above the burning plains through which he had to pass on the day's journey; and it was important to ascertain how far it was to the base of the mountains.

This fact could only be known by the vegetation, which has its zones of altitude for propagation in the tropics, as it has of latitude in more northern countries. He was too well versed in woodcraft to be unskilled in this essential knowledge. The nobleman observed the diminutive pine trees



and stunted oaks, as sure indications that he was at the lower line where these forest trees will grow. But he gathered some specimens of the *maiz sylvestre*, the wild Indian-corn, the small ears of which were only a few inches long, with the grains adhering to each other in the centre, where the cob exists after cultivation. He plucked also flowers, white and blue, of the *patata*—the wild potato, and pulled up some of the vines to examine the bulbous plants, not much larger than peas.

These vegetable signs demonstrated to his well practised eye, the elevation above the sea; no barometrical experiments would have produced more accurate results. But he held a grain of corn and one of the puny potatoes in his hand for a moment in deep thought. "Yet they will still deny," said he, aloud in soliloquy, "that my country produced either of these in its native state, when I know they are indigenous to the whole torrid zone at the proper altitude above the ocean. They have appropriated both, and with their culture feed millions of people, even retaining the names used by the natives before the conquest, and still used in every *pueblo*. Should a blight come over the one or the other, after centuries of cultivation, perhaps they may then unlearn history, to come hither for primitive plants for a more hardy and healthy growth."

Descending the mountains by a mule-path that led to some *pueblos* beyond the boundaries of the hacienda of Santa Lucia, the Marquez arrived at the head-waters of a stream which flowed before reaching the sea through the dreaded Cañada of *Esqueletos*. It was yet many leagues to that formidable place, supposed to have in its deep abyss a cataract over which no animal could pass with life, nor craft be navigated in safety. But he pursued the road along the



water from *pueblo* to *pueblo*, resting for the night in one of the huts which afforded shelter for him and his servants.

With the morning sun he was again on his way down the narrow valley leading to the frightful cañada. When the long shades of evening had fallen on his lonely path, he arrived at the last *pueblo*, the one nearest to the *Esqueletos*. It was here he had to make his preparations for the daring adventures through the yawning gulf now opening its perpendicular cliffs before him, to warn, by their lofty rugged sides, against the mad enterprise. On entering the small village, whose scattered houses indicated the poverty of the inhabitants, he looked anxiously around for some inviting quarter wherein he might find suitable accommodation.

He looked in vain for any friendly shelter. The houses were small, mean, and with a squalid appearance, indicative of decay or neglect. The *pueblo* had not that bright, clean, healthy aspect which is generally to be found among them in the tropics. The Marquez for a moment regretted his haste in not halting at some other village through which he had passed, where more comforts might have been found. He was about turning his horse's head towards a smiling hamlet, on the distant side of the valley, when his eye caught sight of a little chapel and curacy in a grove of bananas.

He immediately rode up to the curate's house and dismounted. Throwing the rein of the bridle to his *arriero*, he entered the half-open door into a room where was a rough table and two rude benches from hewn logs, with some few low seats on sticks. The floor was the parent earth, the sides of the building adobe, or unburnt brick, without windows, while the rafters were visible under the thatched roof. The room was vacant; but he could see into an inner apartment,



where the priest was apparently in deep meditation or at his evening devotions.

The Marquez seated himself on one of the rude benches or logs, and rapped with his whip-handle on the table. Presently the priest entered in his black silk *sotana*, with his arms folded; and as he bowed low with his shaven crown to his visitor, the nobleman seemed vaguely to recognise his countenance as one seen years before. "Holy father," said the Marquez, rising politely, "I have come to crave your hospitality for the night, and something to eat, for I am famished."

"You have come, my son, where is nothing but poverty. Pass on to the *pueblo*, beyond the *paso*, before nightfall, and escape the robbers," answered the recluse, with much humility, while his little black eyes wandered over the person of the nobleman and over his retinue beyond. "I can give you whatever spiritual succor you may need. It is near time for *oracion*, in which you can mingle your prayers with mine, and continue the same through the watches of the night with me, and thus refreshed by a salutary fast, after the *alavao* at dawn you can depart in peace, comforted and blessed."

"Venerable father, we fast not on a pilgrimage, and our holy Mother Church has appointed this season for a festival. Moreover, night is now coming on, the mists are descending from the hills, the muttering of distant thunder threatens rain."

"My son, you speak well. You visit a sacred shrine, and they hold a high *fiesta* at the *pueblo* beyond the ford to-night. It may be dark when you pass, but the lights beyond will enable you to climb the steep bank. Go on to the broken cross on a pile of stones, where the drunken *peon* murdered his wife and child; from thence your way is clear to



"The tree, where you will find skeletons of three robbers ; then take the left hand road, and before moonrise you will arrive at the *pueblo*."

"Give us what you have, holy father, and we will rest on the floor with you to-night."

"I can give you nothing, my pilgrim son, save some fried bananas, a few figs, and a Chili pepper," answered the priest, in deep humility and eyes turned upwards, with his arms still crossed on his bosom.

"Hard fare for a traveller, holy father ; but we must not complain when the ministers at the sacred altar tell us it is their only food."

The priest winced somewhat at this response, but his little black eyes twinkled with some secret satisfaction.

"Times have changed," added the Marquez ; "times have much changed, when in fitting himself for heaven the evening stewed chicken, the highly flavored salad, and *copeta* of cognac are given up by that epicure *compadre* Anselmo."

The priest started back in astonishment. "It is his voice. By our Lady the Immaculate Virgin of Compostella, it is his voice !" cried the priest, and with a joyful bound he threw himself into the arms of the Marquez, exclaiming : "Miguelito, my own dear Miguelito," as he pressed him to his bosom.

---

## CHAPTER XXV.

PADRE ANSELMO, now before the Marquez, was the former young *cura* who taught him how to search for the *thmostli*. The scene immediately changed upon the recognition. Messengers were sent in all directions for provisions, for fruit, and



provender. In a half hour the larder of Anselmo was stocked amply to sustain a siege of many days from hungry guests. The priest was most particular and minute in his directions to the nobleman's cook. Nor was it long before that artist served up a bountiful repast, rich and varied in meats and fruit, with a suitable dessert and coffee.

Anselmo did full justice to all placed before him, with scarce a word to say while the good cheer was on the table. However, when all was removed, a fit of melancholy or of sentimental reminiscences came over him, that threatened to end in a flood of tears. "Miguelito, my son, you formerly had always a drop of good cognac about you. Have you still kept fast to that virtuous habit among the vices of the continent?"

"Yes, *compadre*, I think some can be found on strict search among my mails."

"That's a good fellow," replied Father Anselmo. "I always believed you would never forget the early lessons I inculcated. And now, my son, I must ask you further—Do you still recollect my instructions to you on the choice of cigars? If I remember, I exhorted you to adhere to Regalias, as most conducive to sweet meditation and innocent conduct. Have you still, Miguelito, my son, cherished my words of wisdom?"

The affirmative response of the Marquez to these home-searching interrogatories filled Father Anselmo with rapture; and when his small wine-glass was replenished with pure brandy, to be sipped while smoking his choice tobacco, he felt amply rewarded for his pious care over the early moral development of the youth. "You never, Miguelito, my son, took kindly to the cock-pit, and I mourned in secret your aversion to that manly amusement; I could have taught you



how to know a chicken, to cut his comb and trim him, and to set the gaffs, so as not to break while bringing blood at every clip. There you were wrong; I could have taught you how to detect cheating, and a game bird from a craven, and how to pit them in the ring. Well, well, it is all past now." Here the lamentations of Anselmo were relieved by a deep sigh.

"They tell me, my son, you have been a great gambler, and lost. That is a pity; a great pity. Had I been with you, I might have improved your fortune. But people will bet after luck changes. They don't know when to quit. Luck never comes more than once a day; to some people only once in a lifetime. Well, well, we need not talk about what cannot be helped." Again a deep sigh relieved the surcharged virtuous emotions of Father Anselmo.

"But what have you been doing all this time, *compadre*?" inquired the Marquez. "I hope you have made your fortune in your superior wisdom and discretion?"

"Far from it, far from it," answered Anselmo, with a shake of his head, and a negative, significant signal of his forefinger before his eyes. "I am not my own master. They have sent me to this out-of-the-way place, because I know the various dialects spoken in the different *pueblos* of this parish. No fees to keep soul and body together, let alone any amusement and pleasure."

"Don't the people pay you for your services?"

"They would pay me if they could; but they are too poor. I never see silver coin—all copper *tlacos*, and my whole annual income I calculate in gold, which is all I have to do with that metal. It amounts to three ounces."

"Three ounces! Is that all for a year's services? I would write to the Bishop, complain to the *Colegiata*. I would pe-



tition the Metropolitan, as this is a missionary parish *propaganda*."

"I did all that, Miguelito. I asked for fifty *pesos*—only fifty dollars—and they sent me a pastoral letter, of fifty-two pages, printed beautifully. The canon who writes the letters of the Bishop, I know very well. His mother sold *puros y barajas*, common cigars and playing cards, while several gentlemen denied the honor of his paternity, resenting this imputation on their mode of settling tobacco bills. He hates the priests of the south—the *curas del sur*—thinks us wicked, ignorant, immoral, while we are martyrs of Carmelite purity and poverty. He sent me a private letter with the pastoral, recommending it for pleasant, light reading. Only think of that—fifty-two pages of anything—light reading! when he knows I have to trust to memory to get through the prayers and the catechism of Padre Ripalda with the children. He said I would admire the style, an excellent imitation of pastorals in the primitive church of the fourth century, of the Syrian Bishop Athanasius. But not one word about the fifty *pesos*."

"Did you thank him for his kindness and attention?"

"Certainly, I thanked him. I wrote, saying I held the pastoral so precious, with its fifty-two pages beautifully printed, that I had placed it for safe keeping in the bosom of the Virgin, where it would remain until the paragraph about the fifty *pesos* was answered. Calling his attention to the omission as accidental, I wished him to send me, out of the fund, some papers of his dear mamma's highly flavored *puros*, six for a *tlaco*, and a few packs of her fresh *barajas*—cards, with many loving remembrances to the dear lady, and to Don Tomas Espada. You must know Espada is an old *picador* in the *toros*—in the bull fights, and his fancy, sky-blue, satin



jacket, with bunches of bright ribbons dangling at the knees of his scarlet silk breeches, it is generally supposed, not only inflamed the rage of the *toro*, but at the same time the tender passion in the susceptible heart of the mamma. Hence the pedigree of the canon."

"And that ended the correspondence?" said the Marquez.

"*Caramba*, no, not a bit of it. He answered like the echo, sent me back the fifty dollars in three gold ounces and two silver *pesos fuertes*. He desired me to write soon again, as we had been boys together, were now brothers in the apostolic succession, and some other *expresiones*, as long and unmeaning as the last page of a *protocolo* by a notary."

"It must be confessed, the secretary," said the nobleman, "does not bear malice."

"Not where it is unprofitable. But he supposed my epistle might become a popular form for correspondence among the *curas del sur* in answer to pastorals, and it was better to pay fifty dollars to buy the copyright. The style is more taking than that of the primitive Christians in the time of Athanasius the Bishop."

"But, Father Anselmo, can you live on a hundred dollars a year?"

"It is all I can get, my son, and I am not dead."

"Your tastes, your habits, even a decent respect for your sacred duties, would require a larger sum."

"I have had only two shirts and not a pair of shoes in the last twelve months. Look here, Miguelito," raising his foot, on the sole of which was a rude piece of leather, bound with coarse thongs passing through his toes, with another over the heel and tied at the ankle, "look at these *guaraches*, like the picture of the apostles in sandals calling on the disciples to



wash their feet; and, like them, I feel refreshed with a *batia* of water, if a village maiden has her hand in it."

The Marquez smiled at this application of Scripture by the merry Father Anselmo, as he replied: "You resemble the primitive Christians in this custom, and deserve to be canonized."

"I would much prefer a pair of new shoes at present."

"You must not want for any comfort, *compadre*, while I have it," said the Marquez.

"What do you care now for me, after years of absence, Don Miguel? You forgot me long ago and the pleasant times we had," exclaimed Father Anselmo, in a sorrowful mood.

"Not so, *compadre*. I look back upon our rambles through the mountains and valleys, rocks and streams, *barrancas* and *cañadas*, as the happiest time in my life. I have thought of you always as the only companion I ever loved. In courts I have wished in vain for such a true friend; in cathedrals I have longed for you at my side, to realize the splendor around, and to listen in rapture to the music, which has not its equal on earth, in the sweet ravishing harmony of its rich and soul-subduing strains. Even among princes I have often thought I would prefer my honest, simple, generous, true-hearted *compadre* to them all. In coming back here, my first wish was to see you. I wrote to the Bishop, whom I know well, to learn your residence, and I suppose the answer is now awaiting my return to Santa Inez. No, no, my dear *compadre*, while I have a *peso* you shall not be poor." All this the Marquez expressed with much earnestness and emotion, as he continued: "Return to the hacienda as my chaplain, and I will send orders that you shall have all you may ask for. Even in death you shall be buried under the altar,



where I will not desert you, for my bones shall be brought to be laid at your side, and our dust at last mingle in one friendly, eternal embrace."

Father Anselmo was weeping like a child; large tears coursed each other down his cheeks, which fell upon his breast. His feelings were too overpowering to give expression in words; a film came over his eyes, with a thick, choking sensation in his throat. At last he found language to relieve his overwrought excitement. "Merciful God in Heaven! that I should live to hear this, to realize a hope, a dream of my life, and my labors rewarded—the return of the boy—the golden visions turned into reality; words spoken which I craved as a boon only in a blessed world hereafter; to hear them now; to see that form once more in the body; to listen to sounds never expected again on earth. 'Tis too much joy, too much happiness for me, a poor, miserable sinner!" Sobs and tears precluded further utterance of the Father Anselmo. He gazed for a moment steadily at the Marquez, adding slowly: "And that noble boy still loves the simple, ignorant, rude, barefooted priest. My own dear Miguelito, may all the saints in heaven pray for your eternal happiness," and he threw himself into the arms of the nobleman.

"Yes, my own *compadre*," answered the Marquez; "in all your simple ignorance a gem is within your bosom, seldom, if ever, worn by prince or cardinal. It is the generous, self-sacrificing sincerity of a warm, true, loving friend. It is more precious than rubies; it is beyond all price. The want of it makes worldly wisdom only vanity, and honors a mere empty pageant, more contemptible than the tinsel in which they are bedizened."

Father Anselmo sat in silence for a moment, and then



replied: "Well, well, it may be so. I know nothing of courts or conclaves. But it now grows late. You need repose, and I will lead you to your couch." Seizing a light from the table, he conducted the Marquez to a small inner room, where he found a bed inviting in his weariness.

Early in the morning the nobleman commenced his preparations for the navigation of the gloomy cañada. He examined carefully the banks of the stream, those towering heights which rose in perpendicular grandeur like huge pali-sades to an altitude of some thousand feet. Through this chasm the waters madly rushed over a bed perhaps fifty yards in breadth, and with an unknown, unfathomed depth. It might be forty miles to the sea; and to traverse that space, what cataracts, what rocks, timber-drifts, and whirl-pools might be encountered! No mortal had ever been known to return from its voyage; none were willing now to venture. It was a surging current, without channel or shore, without safe anchorage or landing-place. Once upon its waters, you were driven on to the sea, or into the more boundless ocean of eternity.

The Marquez had apprised Father Anselmo of his perilous resolve, for the purpose of receiving his valuable coöperation and counsel in the preliminary preparation. The priest endeavored long and anxiously to dissuade him from the attempt. But when he perceived his mind fixed upon the enterprise, the *cura* disguised his forebodings and distress, well knowing that it is dangerous to enter upon fearful actions with a gloomy heart. He supposed the Marquez was in search of some rich *thmostli* to retrieve his desperate fortune. The name of the cañada—of the *Esqueletos*—of skeletons, was indicative of some funereal remains. Its origin was for centuries lost in the shades of antiquity.



It was not with heavy timbers, with iron rivets, that the Marquez designed to form his raft, upon which to float through this rushing tide. On the contrary, he selected long bamboo reeds or cane, called *balzas*, of which he made a platform, interlaced with strong twine. Upon this he placed another similar structure, with the canes at right angles to those beneath. These two were well joined with cords. Upon the lower side of this raft he placed several immense *calabazas*, or calabash, dried in the sun, and air-tight, which he bound securely to the reeds, thus rendering the whole buoyant, and floating lightly upon the water.

With the assistance of the *peons*, under the guidance of Father Anselmo, the raft was complete and launched before noon. The Marquez next procured a supply of provisions, consisting of *tasaco*, the sun-dried meat, in strips, and corn-meal, with some sugar, to make *totopo*, the nourishing food of the *peon* on a journey. He had also a twine hammock, with plenty of cords, his gun, and accoutrements. All of these articles, and the clothing he selected for use, were deposited carefully in a sack, air-tight, impervious to water, so that in no adverse fortune could his baggage or food become damaged. A small dog, of the breed such as the Father Anselmo employed in his sylvan rambles, was to be his sole companion.

Many hours before sundown, the Marquez was fully equipped for his perilous expedition, which he proposed to commence at dawn on the following morning. He therefore returned to the curacy to enjoy, while he could, the hospitality and conversation of his friend the Father Anselmo. They were seated after dinner, receiving the cool breeze which drew through the Cañada, sipping coffee and cognac in the interval of smoking. The *cura* had again essayed to



change the purpose of the nobleman. He had invoked every argument to convince or persuade, but had failed.

Moreover he pitied the Marquez, who he believed was staking his life, with the chances against him, to gain some treasure to retrieve his fortune. He considered it a noble motive, extorting his admiration while he condemned its rashness.

"Stay with me, my dear Miguelito, and we will once more be happy in hunting treasure together. I know where much is yet to be found, and, you with me, we will become rich in a short time."

The Marquez only shook his head in a negative response to Anselmo's generous offer.

"Then I will go with you to the hacienda. You will manage the estate until it is in order and furnishing an ample revenue. If then you wish to return to Spain, I will keep you advised of all things in your absence."

Still no change was visible in the fixed purpose of Don Miguel. The Father Anselmo was in an agony of doubt and dread; all the light flow of cheerfulness was gone, as he sat drooping, sad, and disconsolate. He was debating in his mind, the possibility of success by a final powerful appeal. Nerv-  
ing himself to the desperate effort, with teeth close set, he struck his hand on the table, exclaiming: "I will do it." Then turning, he said, pointing over his shoulder to a corner: "Go there and open the chest; you will find something which may tempt you to stay."

Don Miguel rose and raised the lid, as Anselmo fixed his eyes in an opposite direction on the table before him.

When the Marquez looked into the large box, he started back hastily in ludicrous amazement. The beaming eyes of a pensive beauty, with ruby lips, rosy cheeks, and golden hair,



were bent in a pleasant smile upon the nobleman from within.

"Father Anselmo, what have you here, you old sinner!" cried he, shocked at the sight.

"Something which ought to tempt you," replied Anselmo, without raising his eyes.

"What, what have I to do with this young woman!" exclaimed the Marquez.

Anselmo looked up hastily, and turning on his seat to witness the nobleman's astonishment and shame, burst into a suppressed laugh, which shook his sides in the utmost glee. "Is she not beautiful, beautiful, Miguelito?"

"It is disgraceful, shockingly disgraceful, Anselmo."

Here the priest laughed loud and long, swinging his body back and forth until almost choked. "Pull down the sheet, the sheet," cried he, "and look at her naked charms, her bust and waist, legs and feet!" Again he went off in another peal of laughter.

"This is an insult, Anselmo, to have a woman in your house."

"Say a virgin, a virgin, Miguelito; the virgin of Hue-lapan, newly cream-laid and painted."

"The virgin of what?" asked the Marquez, sharply, but at the same time drawing near to the box and looking in.

The nobleman blushed deeply, as he discovered his mistaking an image for a pretty girl; while Father Anselmo held his sides and groaned from pain caused by his immoderate merriment.

"You have opened the wrong *cofre*, Miguelito; but many a man would have profited by such a blunder without blushing as you do."

The Marquez, however, did not heed this remark, looking



at the beautiful image in the box. "It is well done," said he, "the illusion is perfect."

"Yes," replied Anselmo, "she is more beautiful than Our Lady, the virgin of Ocotlan."

The Marquez started at the comparison, but immediately regained his composure as the priest proceeded. "Poor thing, she had no air lately in *fiestas*, nor exercise in *procesiones*; her cheeks grew pale, and we treated her as a faded beauty ought to be treated, with a fresh coat of rose cream."

"But why keep her here, Anselmo?"

"The chapel at Huelapan is not finished, and the virgin has been on my hands for years. Every spring they expect to complete and consecrate the temple, and every year, therefore, the women have made up for her a new dress and underclothes."

"That must be expensive. Why go to the trouble and cost?"

"Because the fashions change, and she is to be the rival virgin to Ocotlan. It would never answer to have it otherwise. Sometimes they made sleeves puffed out like the skin of a *puerco* full of wine, sometimes short sleeves, sometimes no sleeves at all. Then again a high bosom dress, then a low bosom, then all fine lace. They had to give her pantalettes, and now they talk of crinoline. *Caramba!* that would be crinoline on the outskirts of creation. It is well no change is in silk stockings, satin slippers, in gloves, cambrics, collars and cuffs, or I do not know how we could afford it."

"Happy people, happy people," said the Marquez, "who can have all the benefit of the Paris fashions by joint contribution with comparative economy."

"You say truly, my son, they are a happy people, and stay with me among them. You are too young to die yet; your



fate is inevitable if you attempt the descent of the *cañada*. Stay with me, and perhaps I can supply you with fortune. Come to this other *cofre* and look in it." The priest, approaching another chest, raised the lid and removed some old books that formed a covering on the top. Beneath was deposited a treasure in gold, which might have tempted a conqueror in the Indies.

Bars and ingots of all dimensions, from one pound to ten and twenty in weight, were seen in a rude state, pure, without the mint stamp, yet of the finest quality. It was impossible to estimate the extent or value of the treasure, upon which the Marquez gazed with more surprise than cupidity. Nor did the Father Anselmo break the long silence which prevailed, while the nobleman was lost in astonishment at this unexpected wealth before him.

"This is wonderful," said the Marquez, turning to Anselmo.

"It is the labor of a lifetime," replied the priest. "I worked for this, not for my own benefit, but with the hope you would return to take it and be happy. I have no need of it, and you want it. Take it all, all, noble boy. You spoke words last night more precious to me than gold. Here are former armlets, and bracelets, and anklets; rings for the ears, for the lips, for the nose, for the fingers, all melted down, and the long, broad bands which went over the head from ear to ear, and from the forehead over the skull to the back. I worked alone; not a mortal knows of this treasure. I melted it down and deposited it here, where no one would look for this rich deposit of the precious metal."

The Marquez walked away in silence to resume his seat. The Father Anselmo did not interrupt his thoughts, as he collected the old books over the gold and closed the lid.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

THE Marquez embarked on his frail *balzas* at early dawn. He pushed into the middle of the stream with his setting-pole, where the current soon bore him at a bend out of sight of the good Father Anselmo and assembled *peons*. The spray dashed high over some rocks before him, but, guiding his course near the shore where the channel was open, the raft rapidly flew over the rushing waters in the cataract. Furiously borne along, his brain grew dizzy with the swift-passing objects on the perpendicular sides of the flinty palisades. His breathing was affected by the motion as well as by the apprehension felt in looking to see in front the dashing billows in the descending tide.

It was the first time he had been on a river where he saw the waters rushing down an inclined plane with a velocity threatening destruction to every object on their surface, yet he did not lose his nerve or presence of mind where both were essential. His former experience in mountain *arroyos* taught him that any buoyant object will naturally be thrown towards the centre of the current, and although a rock may look formidable, yet, on approaching, the waters seem to shun it in passing, thus bearing off with them whatever may be floating on their bosom.

With much agility he ran from one side to the other of his *balzas*, whenever his weight or the use of his long setting-pole could more effectually trim its direction. If a side or end of his raft did sometimes strike a rock, its elastic, yielding canes bent without breaking in the shock, to spring away in the deep, clear path. Fearful at first that some belt of stone across would effectually bar his passage, or some preci-



pitous falling cataract would engulf him in its reacting tide, he breathed free when the shelving obstacles began to indicate that, however swift the river might run, it would not end in a perpendicular abrupt fall.

The roar around him at length diminished its deafening noise, the ripples seemed to flow somewhat more gently; but he was caught in the whirlpools at the end of the cataract, to be hurled round violently in eddying circles, which would have dashed his bark to pieces had jutting rocks intervened. Most fortunately the bed of the river was unobstructed, and as he gradually recovered from the vertigo caused by the rotary motion, he moved to the further end of his platform most distant from the centre of the pool, whereby his course would be influenced towards the outer edge of the revolving waves. Soon his raft was caught by a counter-current which bore him under a high rock on shore, in an opposite direction in a placid stream.

It was with joyful surprise he observed that the towering palisades here receded some yards from the water, leaving a verdant level strand slightly elevated above the river. He quickly sprang on shore, securing his raft by a rope, while the dog crept submissively to his feet. His clothes were saturated with spray from the comb of the waves through which he had dashed along. But disregarding, or perhaps refreshed by his humid garments, he carefully surveyed the surrounding scene, where indeed no human foot had been for centuries. The perpendicular walls of the cañada were of rock, but in the small crevices at various altitudes vegetation had put forth to hide somewhat their grey-columned nakedness. The cactus bush, spreading its immense broad trunks or thorny branches, displayed its bright-colored red, yellow, and white flowers; the fan palms, the tropical



fern, waved their leaves gracefully to the wind; wild vines, draped thick with their golden *nanche* berries, the luscious, sylvan apricot, hung down like gorgeous tapestry; small trees, heavily laden with the *ciruela*, the large, crimson, wild plum, attracted flocks of small birds of rich plumage. The large parrot and the wren-paroquet, clustering like wood-pigeons in this safe retreat, built their four-squared and roofed nests so imitative of human habitations as to give rise to those fanciful legends in the torrid zone, that in a former state they had the gift of language, living in communities near mankind, to act as interpreters for the feathered tribes, and mediums of intercourse with man.

Startled by the approach of this unknown invader, they sent forth loud cries and shrill screams, till they assembled in flocks, sailing round over the waving waters, or swinging in the wind on impending branches, to watch his movements. A hermit-ape protruded his grey beard from his cavern, to bask his benumbed limbs on a narrow ledge high above the stream. But when the loquacious bipeds beheld his hairy arms and sides, as if mindful of their traditionary grievances against the human race, of which he seemed the representative in the wilderness, they attacked him *en masse*, circling round his venerable head and striking him with their sharp beaks and strong claws, in a storm of uproar, until the hoary recluse withdrew in silent disgust, as if wearied with the brawling tongues and turmoil of the external world.

On the top of this shelving landscape, with birds and animals, the rugged upper line of the rocky cañada was fringed with a cornice of verdure, which hung over the sides of the cliffs, or ran horizontally along the ground on the edge of the precipice, to serve as a relief to the cold, grey columnar walls beneath. In truth, the position of Olivera towards



objects was reversed to what it had been in the mountains, where he looked down at the scene at his feet, while here, for the most part, he gazed upwards upon it. Light and shade fell with novel hues, so that the aspect of nature was changed, with varied and pleasing colors, until he realized sensations new to him, filled with exciting and thrilling emotions.

It was impossible for him to estimate the distance overcome in his perilous voyage. The speed with which his craft had rushed through the rapids, and the bewildering quick succession of the same kinds of objects, forbade all calculation. It was only by his watch that he could learn the hour of the day, for the sun and shadows were too deceptive in such a strange locality. It was not yet noon, and once more he embarked, keeping near to the shore till he had passed the great whirlpool in the centre. Then launching out into the river, his buoyant canes glided gently down a placid reach, bounded by a mountain at a bend, with bubbling fountains bursting up through the river bed, and throwing their jets for many yards in the air. In front he could observe small cascades sending over the rock walls their waters of spray, resembling threads of silver in the distance; and more near a huge stone, high up the side, would project over the channel, and from its top a mountain brook pour out upon the river its stream, falling like mist, and serving as a gossamer screen through which vistas beyond were imperfectly seen, tipped with the evanescent colors of the rainbow.

Wearied with the enchanting novelties on all sides, the Marquez ceased to regard them in his course, while a delicious languor came over him from the soft, cool breeze wafted along the water, amidst the rich perfume of the wild vines and tropical gums. The roar of the cataract



behind, over which he had passed, was becoming indistinct in the distance. Trees and other vegetation were gradually growing more dense, indicative of a less rocky soil; and the occasional openings at the sides, from which small valleys might be inferred, induced him to hope the dangers were no more.

When the shades of evening began to creep up the sides of the mountain before him, he landed for the night. He drew on the mossy bank his frail but serviceable craft. His sack, containing the stores, ammunition, and clothing, upon examination proved safe from the water or other damage. Thus far, then, his voyage had been favorable, and with a light heart he set about preparing his evening meal, in anticipation of his arrangements for a bivouac.

After he had eaten heartily with a hungry appetite of the simple provisions with which he was supplied, the Marquez looked around for poles to serve as props for his hammock. In the search, near a large rock, he thought he discovered some indications of a former exploration at the point. Stones seemed broken by a hammer, and pieces were found with their sharp edges visible when the earth was removed from them. Some trees grew inclining to the horizon, as though their roots had clung to yielding earth, which might be an artificial mound.

Skirting the edge of a little valley, where the ground began to ascend, and where the washings of the rains might disclose marks of former occupancy, his experienced eye was at length gratified with the sight of a cleft between two rocks that would solve his doubts. If man had ever been in this lonely spot, here was the path through which he came. The narrow pass was less than a yard in width, and might be the track of wild beasts on their way to slake their thirst.



In the course of centuries they, perhaps, wore it down, or even the rain rushing through would waste it away. He looked on the sides, and found fur and hair on the jagged points, and beyond the rock their footprints were fresh in the moist ground. Still undecided, he placed himself on his knees and removed some of the earth where the track of the animals was best defined.

After digging for some minutes, his hatchet struck a hard substance beneath the soil. Carefully scooping out the earth, he brought forth a handful of small pebbles or pieces of stone half the size of his thumb. The Marquez examined these with much scrutiny, and returned to the water's edge to wash them. He took from his pocket a microscope to subject them to a final test. Although nearly round in their form, still they were not smooth, as pebbles become by attrition in the action of water. Again he returned to the spot where they were extracted, to draw forth a second supply. The same experiments were repeated, with like results.

The Marquez slowly yielded to the proof these pebbles presented that they had been placed there by human agency. But in order to remove all doubts, he instituted further excavations to the right and left without meeting with any specimens whatever. In digging, however, in front and rear of the excavation first made, he found an abundance of the same size and shape. A smile of satisfaction was upon his countenance, when he gave up further search. He returned to the bank and sat down upon the *balzas*, to cast the small pebbles one by one into the placid pool at his feet. The river, however, was too deep at this point to send forth any return bubbles where they struck the bottom. For in this way the Marquez was accustomed to ascertain the soundings of streams.



The important discovery, however, he had just made, induced him to relinquish his plan of descending further along the river. He had found more than was hoped for, he had found a path leading up to the heights, and not only a path, but a royal public road of the ancient inhabitants. In his youthful adventures in former searches for *thmostli*, he had seen roads of the ancients, which still remain in preservation wherever they have been neglected or unknown to the conquerors.

One of these royal avenues was now at the crevice between the rocks, and without further examination, he knew by experience how, and of what it was constructed. Whenever the native monarchs made conquest of a province, their first care was to establish through it a grand and royal road, called in the court language of the ancient empires an *ochpantli*; not for the march of armies, or the movements of commerce, but for the transportation of tribute and the transmission of intelligence, by means of royal messengers running on foot. They were without domestic animals—beasts of burden were unknown. Everything was carried on the backs of slaves. Each *ochpantli* was on an undeviating straight line, or only deflected when an insurmountable obstacle intervened, an inaccessible mountain or precipitous *barranca*. Made of small broken stone unmixed with earth, they were two feet in depth and the same in width. The *ochpantlin* were the slender cords which held together an empire; but the extreme length of these roads, hundreds of leagues in extent, rendered them frail ligaments against the inroads of civilized Europeans.

Before sundown our adventurer had prepared his couch upon the *balzas* whereupon to pass the night. Taking a coil of hair rope called a *cabestro*, he placed it on the ground in a



circle, completely surrounding the raft, serving as a sure protection against venomous or other reptiles, which will not crawl over its rough, jagged surface. Indeed, it may be well supposed that it was one of these which was used in ancient necromancy to guard the magic circle against the entrance of the serpent or spirit. His dog and the camp-fire would frighten animals that might approach. Thus protected, the Marquez soon sank into profound repose.

In the morning, after due caution, he essayed the exploration of the *ochpantli* leading through the two rocks. The ground was thickly studded with trees and vines; but with his *machete*, a long sharp wood-knife, he trimmed away the interlacing branches whenever they impeded his advance, until he was high enough above the valley to be free from such molestation. Having once ascertained the course pursued by the *ochpantli*, he had no great difficulty in keeping on or near to its track; and as he ascended the stony cliff, the way became more distinctly defined in the scanty vegetation.

After hours of toil he reached the summit, whence an unobstructed view opened up to him on all sides. The convent of the *Retiro*, as he anticipated, was within a short distance of the place where he stood, situated on a beautiful but narrow plain, bounded by *cañadas* and *barrancas*, and inclosed with a high, white wall of light-colored stone. This wall was now the only obstacle to his entrance; nor was it one which appeared formidable. Yet it would require of him a return to the river for ropes with which to essay its escalade. But first he made a careful examination of the points where an entrance could be most easily and secretly effected into the extensive inclosure, and the day was nearly spent before he had finished his survey. Returning to the



river, he resolved to defer his enterprise till morning, as the sun was now fast sinking in the west.

But early next day he was up, and his final preparations made for the last effort to reach the young lady. Now, however, he laid aside his rough dress, appropriate only for the woods and water. He replaced it with a rich suit, such as he wore in full costume at Santa Lucia, and such as he deemed appropriate for the presence into which he was about to enter. The weapons upon his person were concealed from view, except a small and well tried rapier at his side, that appeared more ornamental than appropriate for a desperate encounter.

The wall was scaled without much difficulty, when the nobleman found himself within the grounds, but yet at a considerable distance from the deserted convent. Accustomed as he was to the artistic skill with which the gardens in Europe are embellished, he could not but pause to gaze in admiration on a scene where every resource of art or wealth seemed exhausted to adorn an extensive space with every conceivable beauty, heightened as it was by the rapid and rich luxuriant growth of tropical vegetation. But he had not time to dwell on the prospect as he walked on at a rapid pace. Before him lay the old convent, divested of its gloomy monastic appearance by the recent improvements made on its outer walls and turrets. It seemed more like a modern structure, built according to some antique style, than a monkish retreat transformed to other and far different uses.

Cautious in his approach as he drew near, he first made a complete circuit of the building, through the sheltering shrubbery, crossing in the way the broad, level avenue leading down to the bridge at the *barranca*. He noted care-



fully the absence of all fresh horse tracks upon its smooth sand, from which he inferred no one had recently arrived at the convent. He then drew near, close to its walls, screening himself at times behind fountains or statues, in trellised walks or arbors, or between rows of flowers and roses, everywhere in profusion. Believing himself still unseen, when within a few paces of the front entrance, he bounded rapidly across the open space intervening, to gain the steps under the shade of the outer vestibule. The corridor, under low arches, was paved with marble, and the dimly lighted but high hall which ran into the interior of the edifice appeared to have the same flooring, with walls of scagliola.

Passing on further, he found himself in a circular apartment, in the centre of which was a fountain lighted by a dome of stained glass from above. Several passages from this rotunda radiated in different directions. He threw himself upon a divan to rest, for he felt fatigued, and to reflect upon his future movements. The sweet notes of a mocking-bird were heard distinctly in one of the rooms quite near. Soon after some person seemed to speak to it, but in words indistinct and unintelligible. Then again a *clarin*—the clarionet-bird—whistled some melodious bars from the opera of Ernani, and, after further coaxing, it warbled several more of Casta Diva.

The Marquez rose and pushed open a door whence the sound seemed to proceed. But the saloon was untenanted, although the gorgeous paintings, yielding carpets, lace curtains, and other furniture, rich in all the wantonness of lavish luxury, indicated that it was one prepared for use. Through the drapery, however, at an opposite entrance, he could well imagine the occupant might be found further within. Walking on, therefore, and pushing aside the light curtains at the



door, he paused in the second apartment, equally magnificent with the one he had passed. In the profusion of furniture, vases, paintings, statuary, and other splendid ornaments, his presence was unnoticed by the lady at the lattice, who was talking to the *clarin*.

She was tall, of a beautiful figure, with blue eyes, a mild, animated sweetness of countenance, robed in a light, white, plain morning dress, while her dark brown hair fell flowing upon her shoulders. The lady was talking with some interest to the imprisoned bird, coaxing more music from the feathered warbler, while her fine, classic features were lighted up with a faint smile, as the fleeting excitement gave a gentle, roseate tint to her fair cheek. To the Marquez, with his Italian ideal of the beautiful, she seemed almost too divine in her loveliness to be mortal, as he stood in silence gazing on her graceful form and sweet face.

In turning from the lattice, she discovered the handsome nobleman in the dim light of the background. At first she was uncertain whether he was not one of the pictures upon the walls; but as her eyes became regulated to the shadows, she gazed upon him with apprehension and terror. Sinking upon a sofa, her cheeks lost all their color, and, breathing a deep sigh, her head drooped slowly upon the cushions. Her eyes were closed, seemingly in mental prayer, while a tremor on her lips indicated an inward agony of soul.

The nobleman approached her respectfully, and, kneeling at her side, he took her cold hand in his. For an instant she opened her eyes to look steadily upon him; but they once more closed, as she murmured to herself: "In this bright world, so full of misery, must only the beautiful among mortals aid such deadly crimes?"

"Dear lady," replied he, soothingly, "I am incapable of



crime. Look upon me, and perhaps you will learn to view me more kindly."

But she made no response in her sorrow, while he continued: "I have pitied you in your affliction, and I come to aid you."

A convulsive shudder came over her limbs, as she withdrew her hand to bury her face in the pillow. She gave utterance to some moaning sobs in her deep distress before she rose to regain her breath.

"It is a dream," said she, "horrid and unreal. I thought I had passed through worse than the blackest phantoms of the night; but this is fiendish; no human being could have devised such a plan, fit only for a demon." She wrung her hands in an agony of woe, while she rose to her feet from the sofa—to sink back again in her feebleness.

"Dear lady, once more I beseech you to look upon me and listen. I have not come to increase your sufferings. I have come to have you fly with me."

"To fly whither, sir?—to the ship, to be sold to the slaver, and then carried to the African coast, there to be bartered as merchandise to a black, brutal barbarian for slaves. He has threatened me with this often, and I was foolish enough to suppose him incapable of such an outrage. But you have come at last, as he threatened you would."

A swoon relieved her of further consciousness of a fate so horrible. It was with much difficulty the Marquez could restore her breathing, or quicken the dormant faculties of life into renewed action. Even after she had recovered, he was at a loss how to renew the subject, lest, before he could explain, her convulsions would return.

"I have seen the kind Lulu in her *pueblo*," said the Marquez, cautiously, in a gentle tone.



"What did she tell you?" exclaimed the lady, starting from her seat.

"To help you, dear lady; and I promised."

"Do you come from her—from her, sir?"

"I come from her; and moreover, she has given me your letters as evidence that you are to trust me."

"Lulu has given you my letters?" cried she in terror and amazement.

"Yes, dear lady, your letters, which I will give to your mother in New York."

"Why did that child trust the word of a slaver?" exclaimed the lady, in great distress.

"I am no slaver, nor do I know aught of the detestable traffic."

"Who then are you?" cried she, almost in a frenzy.

"The Marquez de Las Cumbres, a Grandee of Spain, *de la primera clase*."

"How came you here, where he suffers no one to approach?"

"I came without his permission, without his knowledge, by the perilous pass of yon cañada."

"Without his permission! It is death, certain, inevitable death; fly while you may, and live if your intention were to save me," implored the self-sacrificing creature in the generosity of her heart.

"I will save you, dear lady, if you will trust me, and follow my instructions."

"It is too late, too late," she replied, mournfully. "I thank you for your noble effort; but it is too late. The slaver comes to-day. I feel it. I know it now."

"Do you then submit to your doom, dear lady, without one effort to free yourself?"



"I submit only to force, to what is inevitable ; but if I fly with you now, before sundown, with the blood-hounds on our track, you will be captured and perish. No, no, my generous, unknown benefactor, this cannot be."

"But would you not attempt to escape if I can assure you of my safety?"

"Most willingly would I leap into the frightful *barranca* if there were one chance that I could be free. I would brave the rushing waters of the yawning cañada, if it were not certain destruction. I care not for life ; but I dare not destroy myself ; it is sinful in the sight of God, and I must submit to His awful will. I have prayed earnestly for death, and it will be a boon when it comes ; but I am forbidden to seek it."

"Then it is not fear that restrains you?"

"Fear ! Of death, I have no fear ; it is only man I dread, and his demon passions ; death is the only hope I have. Teach me where to find for myself an innocent grave, and I go with gladness."

"Then you will fly with me wherever is any hope of an escape?" again asked the nobleman.

"Let to-day pass away in peace, and if I am here to-morrow or hereafter, come for me, or send, and I will go by day or night, by *barranca* or cañada. Only, I pray you, incur no risk of your life for me," said the lady, sorrowfully, as she pitied in her gentle heart the handsome nobleman who she believed was rushing on to a certain sacrifice in his impulse to save her.

"Then, dear lady, I trust you will live to see many happy days in store for you," taking her yielding hand and pressing it to his lips.

"No more happiness for me in this world," she sobbed. "I pray only for one day to throw myself into my mother's



arms, and as she parts the hair upon my brow, I may look into her sweet eyes and tell her that I am innocent, foully wronged. She will believe me, for she knows me incapable of deceit. Then to give one long, tender, last embrace to my little brother and little sister is all I ask before I die."

The plaintive sweetness of the lady's voice while speaking brought tears into the eyes of the nobleman. But time was wanting for further intercourse. They heard the sound of approaching footsteps, when discovery would lead to danger and inevitable destruction to their hopes. With a hasty farewell the Marquez leaped lightly from the lattice upon the garden terrace below, and was lost amid the leaves and groves of this Elysian wilderness.

---

## CHAPTER XXVII.

THE object of the nobleman having now been accomplished, after all the trials and dangers of his fearful voyage, he felt solicitous for the final success in the liberation of the distressed lady. He had no further difficulties to apprehend except those incident to her escape. It did not seem possible that the royal *ochpantli* would abruptly terminate in a *barranca*; and he knew it led to level country, from whence he might return to Father Anselmo. Revolving various plans in his mind, he rambled on, regardless of his steps, till the lane he was pursuing suddenly ended.

It was then for the first time he discovered he had in deep thought lost his way. Doubtful in which direction to turn, he drew near to a brawling fountain, where a sun-dial was placed by the old monks to ascertain the points in the hea-



vens. Again he started, more confident of his course, little heeding surrounding objects, as he supposed he must ultimately reach the wall at the place of his entrance, although from the intricacy of the walks amid the winding labyrinths, it would easily have confused one less accustomed to tangled shrubbery.

Passing leisurely over an open circle where several radiating walks diverged, he was startled by a light tap upon the shoulder. Looking up, an unknown man stood before him. His dress was clean but coarse, with heavy shoes and uncouth appearance. He had on a pair of wide white pantaloons, supported by a broad belt, with silver clasp, to which a pistol in a leathern case was suspended. Around his waist was a broad, ample, red silk sash. His blue cloth jacket was profusely adorned with black trimming, which did not conceal a heavy, coarse red flannel shirt, unbuttoned at the throat. His face was nearly lost in long, bushy, neglected whiskers, with an unshaven beard; his hat was a coarse Panama. In stature he was much larger than the Marquez, and apparently his equal in strength.

"A good day to you, señor," said he, raising his hat with one of his large sun-burnt hands.

The nobleman returned the salute without stopping. But the man had no intention to suffer his departure.

"I have lost my way through these bushes, in my road to the convent, and a thousand thanks to you if you will help me out of the difficulty," said he, with a rude, familiar tone.

The Marquez pointed to the building shining in the distance, and advised him to follow one of the main avenues. But still the man detained him with further questions, declaring that he had lost the path for want of a compass and would not find it without taking the correct bearings.



“As you belong to this place,” said the stranger, “you had better come with me to the convent. I have a little business up there which, if it turns out well, I don’t care to help you to a few doubloons to-line your pockets.”

The expression of the nobleman’s countenance indicated some surprise at this communication.

“Oh, you need not look astonished. I have arranged it all with Don Nicolas. If I like the piece of frailty, I can have her for a hundred ounces, and I think I shall take her anyhow. You see, the young Agara chief wants a pretty white woman, and offers liberally in Mandingo slaves, young, healthy, and greasy with fat. So I cannot lose by the trade on a trial of her.”

“I am afraid I cannot serve you,” the Marquez replied.

“Not help me? Perhaps you are in the market, and want her for an assorted cargo.”

“I want nothing to do with you,” cried the nobleman, sternly.

“Well then, *hombre*, my man, I want a word with you. What are you doing here at the convent?” asked the slaver, with much passion.

The Marquez eyed him steadily, and then ordered him to pass on. But the slaver unbuttoned his pistol-cover as he remarked: “We will see who will order and who obey when I am aboard with a clear deck.”

He drew forth his revolver; but as he placed his fingers upon the lock, the rapier of the nobleman flashed in the sun, and at the same instant fell upon the hand of the man before he had time to aim his weapon. His grasp was palsied by the sudden blow, and the pistol fell to the ground, while he uttered a yell of rage and pain, with his eyes glaring like a mad bull upon his assailant. The pain, however, was momen-



tary, for he immediately displayed from under his red flannel shirt a heavy dagger. With this he made a plunge at his antagonist, who parried it with much ease.

They stood for a moment to look upon each other before renewing the deadly strife. Both were masters of their respective weapons, and in other matters fairly matched, except the blow upon the slaver's hand had slightly disabled him in the free use of it. The Marquez, while cool, with nerves well braced, wished him to renew the attack, as he could more readily avail himself of the least indiscretion in his savage rage. But his skilful enemy knew the advantage of the defensive, in which he might perhaps grasp the rapier or break it.

The slaver looked for a moment to the ground where the pistol lay, and at the same instant the rapier was within an inch of his throat; but he warded off the lunge with a quick parry, while the nobleman, perceiving that he himself must follow up the attack thus renewed, took his position with all the precision of a common sporting encounter. With his weapon at a poise, he made his foot, hand, and eye keep play in time, as he pushed the man with every trick known in the use of the small-sword.

Foiled in every attempt, however, the Marquez drew back to recover his wind, for the vigorous attack had much exhausted his breath. His adversary, perceiving this, and supposing the Marquez was about to quit the field to escape through the shrubbery, for an instant forgot his cunning in his boiling passion, and made a forward movement. A second rap across the knuckles soon taught him the folly of his rashness, as he withdrew to his former defence. But the nobleman, in following up his hit, soon observed that the poniard was not held with the former strong grip by his opponent.



The last blow had weakened the fingers of the slaver, which the Marquez now turned to his profit by several skillful plunges, one of them bringing blood from the slaver's wrist. The warm stream trickled down to the handle of the dagger, accelerated in its flow by the constant use of the hand in warding off the rapier's point. In this slimy fluid the short weapon could not be held or wielded with much tenacity, as the handle slipped by the pressure of the fingers upon it, and the diminishing strength of the defence was quite perceptible.

Again the slaver cast his eyes upon the revolver at his opponent's feet, which indicated his intention to seize it if possible. The Marquez, by a feint, encouraged him in the attempt; but when least expecting it, the slaver threw up his left hand to ward off the rapier; at the same instant, hurling his dirk at the nobleman's head, he rushed forward to pick up the pistol. Had not the slaver's hand been weakened, the dagger would have taken effect in the face of his enemy; but its aim, though well directed, was wanting in strength and steadiness. The heavy weapon flew swift, close to his ear, and as the slaver bent forward to grasp the revolver, the Marquez passed the keen blade of his weapon through his side thus exposed for an instant defenceless.

The wounded man uttering a deep groan, as the weapon was withdrawn, fell over on his back, with his eyes fixed on his opponent. Soon a film came over the slaver's vision, blood oozed from his mouth, his fists and teeth clenched, a convulsive tremor shook his rigid limbs, and, with a dying effort turning his face to the ground, his spirit fled. He had gone to answer at a higher tribunal for his crimes, where the souls of many human beings, murdered by his nefarious traffic, would bear witness on his final audit; for he had sent them,



men, women and children, youths and maidens, before him to appeal from man to the vengeance of Heaven.

The Marquez stood over the dead body of his formidable antagonist, to spurn it with his foot. Disgust and contempt were marked upon his lineaments as he withdrew to a bubbling fountain near by to wash the stains of the recent conflict from his person, and wiping well the drops of gore from the trusty rapier, to replace it in the scabbard. This being done, he returned to the dead slaver, to dispose of the corpse so as to leave no trace of his presence in the gardens. Unwinding the heavy folds of the wide silk sash from the lifeless mass, he placed it under the unresisting arms, and dragged the body to the wall which skirted the edge of the *barranca*. By means of the rope the Marquez had brought to effect an entrance, he elevated the burden to the top of the inclosure, and from thence pushed it off with a felon's burial into the deep abyss below, whence a low rumbling sound returned as a funereal wail over the slaver's grave of bleaching bones. The gloomy vultures, those hideous *sopolotes*, soon threw dark shadows over the spot, as they flapped their broad black wings in expectation of a rich banquet, and, slowly sailing down on their glossy raven plumes into the bottom of the *barranca*, they seemed to be sable ministers of Satan, summoned to a subterranean orgy over a choice spirit returning to his last home.

Two evenings thereafter the Father Anselmo was rejoiced to welcome the return on foot of his dear Miguelito, whom he received as one risen from the dead. The Marquez related to the generous *cura* all of his adventures, save those met within the garden walls of the Retiro. He never alluded to the lady or the slaver. He spoke only of his discoveries in the *cañada* and *ochpantli*, the ancient road that traversed *barrancas*



and cañadas. They talked long and learnedly of *thmostli* treasure which might be found in this newly discovered region, and they resolved upon its further exploration.

It was the secret wish of the nobleman that Anselmo would traverse the Aztec path to become familiar with the route the young lady could take when making her escape. He intended the *cura* should assist; and that he might become accustomed to the localities, he led Anselmo a few days thereafter close under the wall where he had entered the grounds. A group of tamarind trees grew within, where the vanilla vines clung to the lower branches, where their pendent beans were easily recognised, and where the dense shrubbery prevented observation. With their hatchets they readily constructed ladders and placed them against the wall.

Father Anselmo traversed the inclosure with him without fear of discovery at this wild point, more than half a league in distance from the convent. The Marquez had led him on in expectation of new discoveries in what seemed to him deserted fields of the old monks. But when they reached a grassy knoll whence the porcelain dome of the building, resplendent in the sun, was distinctly visible, he related to the *cura* the nefarious purposes to which it was now appropriated. The nobleman dwelt but lightly on the topic, as one which was no affair of his. But he knew he had said enough to awaken all the tender sympathies of the Father Anselmo, who in his simple, generous heart, was horror-stricken with the tale of outrage and deadly sin.

It was now idle to invite the *cura's* attention to other topics when they were once more beyond the walls of the gardens. The legend of the abducted lady was too vividly upon his mind for other subjects to interest him. In this



mood they returned to Anselmo's home, having explored every narrow pass amid these unknown *cañadas*, *barrancas*, and mountains. Father Anselmo proposed the rescue of the young lady at once, without weighing the difficulties of success, and the dangers, especially to her, of a failure. The Marquez was more cautious, or, as Anselmo believed, more cold in undertaking the enterprise. But he pointed out to the *cura* so many obstacles to be overcome that Anselmo was willing to follow his lead in the matter, provided only he would lend his aid.

The roads were few in number which ladies could traverse, leading to the further side of the snowy sierra. These could be easily guarded by Sabina's minions, and a recapture effected unless they overcame the passes before he was aware of the flight. The mules could not make the journey with her under several days' continuous travel, and in that time Sabina could send his swift agents to every point. For these reasons his Miguelito asked time to reflect, to which the impatient *cura* reluctantly consented.

The purpose of the Marquez was now to return to the coal-pits of the *carboneros*, on the path to the *volcan*, at whose *hacals* or huts he expected letters from the credulous valet Domingo. Olivera could excuse the superstitious fears of his servant in consideration of the copious details communicated in writing. In truth, Domingo's cowardice made him at all times on the watch for information; and thus, even trivial circumstances were treasured up as important facts.

On arriving at the coal-pits he was not disappointed in a voluminous correspondence from Domingo. He informed his master, among other matters, that Don Nicolas was expecting his return before he would go, at the end of a week, down to the *ensenada* on the coast.



This was important information; for in the absence of Sabina, the rescue could be made in safety. He therefore wrote to Father Anselmo, apprising him of this good news, and of the propitious time approaching for the accomplishment of their plan. He further stated that Lulu had gone to the Retiro, acting under his instructions. But, unfortunately, this missive never reached its destination. The *coreo*, or foot-messenger by whom it was sent, lost it from his hat while fording a stream; and, fearful of some dire consequences, for a fault the enormity of which he could not in his ignorance estimate, he deserted to his *pueblo*, without seeing or sending any message of the mishap to Anselmo.

The good *cura*, in the meantime, had gone in search of *thmostli* to the cañada of Esqueletos. He loitered near to the *bosque* of the *tamarindos*, under the walls, and several times found himself climbing the ladders and roaming among the beautiful grounds in the spacious gardens. In one of these adventures he encountered Lulu, to whom he was well known; for her *pueblo* of *Tehuancingo* lay within his former parish. Lulu told him all she knew of the lady; and, finding him interested in her fate, promised him an interview with her. Nor was this difficult to accomplish, as the lady herself was equally anxious to see one who sympathized with her misery, and who, perhaps, might prove serviceable. They therefore met in the gardens, near the *tamarindos*, where the lady could walk without fatigue, and where was no danger of a surprise. It was, moreover, thought advisable there to meet, as it taught her the way to the place when she must leave the inclosure.

In these interviews the distress of the lady and her tale of woe had such an effect upon Father Anselmo, that, in his excited feelings of pity and indignation, he forgot his promise



to the Marquez to leave all to his direction. It was therefore agreed she should fly so soon as Anselmo could procure animals and suitable *arrieros* to aid the escape. For this purpose he left the gardens by the *ochpantli*, and returned to his curacy. In one day he prepared everything to hasten back to the *tamarindos*. A walk of two leagues had to be undertaken by the lady before the road was practicable for animals. But in her desire to escape, she could have endured a much longer journey on foot.

Father Anselmo wrote to the Marquez in the sierra, that on the following morning the escape would be made. Sending the letter by a trusty messenger, the nobleman received it three days thereafter. Although greatly surprised at this rash movement, it was now too late to retrieve the false step once taken. He therefore resolved to aid the plans he had not counselled. By taking some unfrequented paths through the mountains he could only hope on the next evening to fall on the road proposed by them to be travelled. Regretting the haste of Anselmo, while he could not blame him for his zeal, the Marquez, now as it was sun-down, made all his preparations for leaving at early dawn.

In the meanwhile Father Anselmo withdrew the lady from the Retiro in company with Lulu, and had conducted her on foot over the rugged part of the Aztec road.

"Here let us repose for a few hours, after your fatiguing walk, my child," said the good Father Anselmo, as he sat on a mossy rock at the side of the lady, under the shade of some wild lemon trees, on the declivity of a mountain, where a small rivulet ran with its cooling waters at their feet. "Here you may rest in safety till the shades of evening fall upon our path, when we will pursue our flight."

"But, good Father," murmured the lady, "I do not feel



fatigue; this stream has refreshed me, and I pray you, therefore, go on till nightfall."

"Much better, my child, that you take a *siesta* at this hour, and when the sun throws long shadows to the east we will then once more be upon the road."

Lulu pressed the hand of her mistress, adding, in a soft tone: "The good *padre* speaks well. Be counselled by the good Father; he knows best."

"If you think so, *Lulucita mia*, I will obey; but I am afraid that in my impatience I will be unable to shut my eyes in sleep at this inviting spot."

The little *Dolores* was drooping from the over-excitement of the day, with the warm walk at the *barranca*. Her eyes closed heavily, and she was in the land of dreams. But the lady felt too vividly the novelty of her situation to think of rest. She reclined, however, upon a pile of blankets and shawls to please the good Anselmo, who watched over her with tender solicitude. Gradually a feeling of languor crept over her delicate limbs, and in a few minutes she had sunk into a deep sleep.

When the lady awoke, the sun had long passed the meridian. Lulu was standing at her side with some wild fruit. "Eat this, dear lady, before we proceed—before you proceed further, and I trust you will be able to endure the evening's travel."

"Thank you, my kind one," she answered, in a gentle tone, taking the basket from her hand. "When our dangers are past, *Lulucita*, I will repay you for your love to me. I will tell you fairy tales and sing you wild songs; not such as I sang at the *Retiro*. I will tell you of my sweet home, where I am going once more, and of my mother, and little brother, and dear little sister. And, Lulu, you must go with me.



My dear mother must see you, to bless you, and my little sister must kiss you for your loving kindness to me in my sad distress."

The eyes of Lulu sparkled with delight at the proposal. "And Lulucita, just now I saw my dear mother in my dream, which has made me so joyous. She was smiling once more as she used to smile when I lay in her lap. I will see her again, Lulu *cara mia*, and then she will weep tears of joy that I have come back to her."

Lulu nestled by her side, and entreated her not to think of what had happened, as she kissed her hand tenderly.

"But, Lulu *mia*, I must think of my mother, since she now smiled sweetly on me in my delicious sleep. I have not seen her do that, in my dreams, for many a day. Yet here come the mules, and we must go from this lovely place."

Now they were all mounted to pursue their way along a small, uninhabited valley, with mountains on either side. The tall trees shaded the ground, free from underwood, and the branches, interlocking high above their heads, formed Gothic sylvan arches, through which they could see far before them in the opening glades. The cool breeze of the evening, perfumed with scent of the balsam bark and copal wood, contributed to the lady's animation, as she talked to Lulu or listened to Father Anselmo, or watched in pensive silence the flight of the brown woodcock, or the rapid movements on its brilliant wings of the golden humming-bird, and the graceful flutter of immense butterflies at her feet.

"I am afraid, good Father, it will be dark before we reach the ranche you spoke of. What then; are we to sleep in this pretty valley till morning?"

"It will soon be nightfall, dear lady. But then we will wait till moonrise, and pursue our road by its light."



“How delightful it will be to see so many strange sights in the imperfect shadows of the night!”

“You can see nothing distinctly in the moon’s rays, my child; and although cool and pleasant, yet the road is dull and fatiguing.”

“I should think not, Father Anselmo; for if you cannot see objects perfectly in the moonlight, still you can imagine you see a thousand much more enchanting than any sights in daytime. Then you can play so many pranks with your nerves; whisper to them that yonder stands, by that fallen tree, a wolf, or *coyote*, or a mountain leopard, waiting to spring upon you, and your nerves will almost push you from your saddle. You see yon vine dangling from the tree? That may be the bones of a murdered man, and the white stone beneath is his ghost, and then your nerves catch hold of your hair to break a bonnet-string or choke you.”

“*Ave Maria, por el Amor de I-e-sus!*” exclaimed Lulu, crossing herself, in a mental prayer. “Dear lady, do not talk so; for *fantasma* might come, and then what would you do, when you have no image of the virgin, nor cross, and can say neither *ave* nor *credo* to help you?” The frightened girl, afraid to look round, sought the side of the priest for spiritual safety.

“*Lulucita, pobracita!*” exclaimed the lady, mournfully. “I only wish I had your belief in the return of an *espiritu* to earth again. Then I would be happy in the hope of visiting those dear to me at my home.” Tears came fast into her eyes, and it was with much difficulty she suppressed a sob. But her emotion was not observed; for at that instant the *arrieros* halted in front to wait for the moonrise, and, dismounting, helped the lady to the ground.

The last streak of light of departing day was only visible



on the highest peaks of the mountains, when Padre Anselmo and Lulu sank to their knees in prayer, for it was the hour of the *oracion* ; and when they closed their devotions with a vesper hymn to the Virgin, the muleteers added their deep tones in fine harmony, while the lady, thankful to Providence for His mercies through the day, joined her exquisite voice to enrich the melodious anthem.

The animals were led to the crystal stream to drink, while Father Anselmo, collecting the woollen *serapes* and thick shawls, prepared a soft couch for the lady. Lulu nestled at her feet, and perceiving the mournful sadness of her voice, kissed the lady's hand in silence, striving in vain to lead off her thoughts from gloomy forebodings. "Dear lady, look up, and tell me one of the pretty legends you promised ; or if you do not wish to speak, I will sing for you, or take down your hair to braid it once more. When the moon rises the night will be lovely. Then I will frighten you, dear lady, with the owl hooting in the hollow tree, the bat flying near your head ; the *chifla*, the watcher-bird, whistling like a man calling ; and the fire-flies flitting across the road in front, each of which you will be sure is some one with a light in his hand. But here are the *cocuyos* now," and she ran to the bushes, bringing back a handful of those large bugs with heads phosphorescent.

Lulu placed an image of the virgin at the root of a tree, and on top of the picture her ebony cross. Around these in half-circle she fastened the illumined beetles, till the sacred objects were invested in almost a blaze of light. "Look, dear lady, at the glory above the cross, how brightly it shines like an altar with holy candles !" said Lulu, clapping her hands.

The lady smiled sweetly at the effort of the innocent girl to amuse her, while she drew from the folds of her dress some



lines of poetry which once had pleased her in her prison, to read them again by the phosphoric lights.

"Two are enough for reading," said Lulu, throwing them into the lady's lap for her to peruse the print with that limited number. Thus the kind-hearted girl endeavored to divert her from brooding over her sorrows till the moon rose in the valley, when they once more resumed their journey.

---

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

WHEN the Marquez arrived at the *pueblo*, on the road through which the fugitives must travel on the direct way to the passes of the sierra, he was accosted before dismounting by a *peon* in the dress of an *arriero* or muleteer. "I have been looking for you, señor," said the man, taking off his *sombrero* and bowing low.

"For what purpose, *hombré*?"

"They went through here yesterday; my brother, Diego, is an *arriero* with them. He told me to watch your coming, to let you know. But the *cura* did not come."

"Why not?"

"Some one in a *pueblo* was dying, and he had to leave them to attend the death-bed with the *Dios*. But Diego, my brother, knows all the by-roads, and will conduct them safely."

"Thank you," exclaimed the nobleman, tossing him a silver *peso*, and put spurs to his horse, riding off in hot pursuit.

The man caught the coin before it fell, and, looking at the precious metal for a moment, smiled as he quoted the proverb,



“Where such fruit fall, the tree must be near.’ I will try if I cannot pick up a hat-full.” So saying, he unloosed his spirited horse, hitched near the spot, and rode after the Marquez. But he soon turned into a by-path which lessened the distance, and when he entered the road again he was up with the nobleman. Although both were at full gallop, the *arriero* could not resist displaying the points of his animal by some *caricols* and leaps, which he was certain must be admired. Then raising his *sombrero* gracefully, he said: “I hope you will permit me to serve you. I know every path in the mountains. My name is José—at your disposition, señor.” Content with an approving nod, they rode on at the same furious gait; nor did they draw rein till some rocky ground required more caution in passing.

“Would the señor *amo* permit me to point out a shorter cut where we need not blow our horses over the stones?” said José, most humbly. Perceiving no objection, he leaped his animal over a pile of prostrate cactus, of which a hedge fence was made, and the Marquez following, they rode through level fields in the direction of a *pueblo* in the distance. When they had travelled for an hour, in silence, the nobleman drew rein, and made a signal to the man to slacken his pace, as he inquired: “Do you intend, José, that we shall rest for the night at this *pueblo*?”

“It is full of robbers,” replied the new servant who had just been hired on horseback at a gallop. “It is full of robbers, señor *amo*. A village is beyond.”

Again they were at full speed through the fields, and when they arrived at the outskirts of the *pueblo*, the sun was still an hour above the horizon. But no signal came from the master to hold up as he galloped through the street. When it was passed the Marquez urged on their steeds, with the foam



dropping from their bits and flanks. The servant looked for a nod from the nobleman, who still pressed the spurs in the bloody sides of his horse, and José was forced to follow in the same headlong race.

When the village was reached to which José had directed his attention, the Marquez inquired how far it was to the next *pueblo* beyond, and José trembled lest he should order another ride before a final halt. On an assurance, however, that nothing would be gained by travelling in the dark, the nobleman reluctantly dismounted. While José was stripping the reeking animals of their heavy saddles, a *peon* approached to assist him, patting the horses with his hand and holding the bridles, as the girths were being loosed. "Let me help you with that buckle," said he to José, and bending down, whispered: "Be on your guard. You are watched. I have a message from your brother Diego."

The servant unbuckled the girth and removed the saddle without any recognition of the *peon's* services, although he held the bridles till José had adjusted the halters to the necks of the animals. Throwing one of the ropes to the *peon*, he asked him to walk the horse up and down the street to cool him, and at the same time led the other himself. When they had gained a spot free from observation, the *peon* informed him that he had met Diego at sunrise on a lower road leading to a well known pass, more difficult to traverse, but a much shorter route across the sierra. He had gone by that road because all the others were by this time watched. He had been sent by Diego to inform Father Anselmo, who was coming by this *pueblo*.

"And all this is true, Pepe," said José to the *peon*, "on the word of a brother *arriero*."

"On the word of a brother *arriero*," answered Pepe; "and



they will watch you, José, knowing you to be the brother of Diego."

"What then do you advise, Pepe?"

"Remove everything after dark beyond the *arroyo*, which flows over the rocks at the *paso*. They will think your horses have been sent to the *coral*; the saddles can be carried secretly. Walk down then before moonrise, and I will meet you."

At the appointed time the Marquez was at the waters of the *arroyo*. Pepe was there with a guide to pilot them until daylight to the lower road. "*Adios Pepe*," said the Marquez, dropping some silver into the honest fellow's hand as he touched his horse with a spur.

At every *pueblo* through which they passed after sunrise José received some message left behind by Diego. Nor were these communications, though verbal, to be distrusted. Muleteers are proverbial for their honesty, and in their perilous profession a sense of honor and of confidence has grown up towards each other, which often insures safety amidst the imminent dangers of the road. The word of an *arriero* is sacred. But in this instance they all felt an interest in Diego's success, as it was rightly supposed he would receive not only good pay, but a princely *gratificacion* besides.

They assured José the road was not watched above at the passes, and the Marquez rode on leisurely in expectation that all was well. He had resolved to sleep that night beyond the most remote *cumbre* or height, and thus place himself between the lady and danger. As they approached a large open space covered with grass, called the *llano grande*, José cried to him that robbers were in sight in advance. Five horsemen immediately occupied the road in front, well mounted and armed, with their lance-points gleaming in the



sun, and their *bandarolas*, little, red, swallow-tailed flags, flying in the breeze. They beckoned to the Marquez not to advance.

He checked his horse at the summons, and prepared for an encounter, feeling his rapier was in its place, and the caps properly on his revolver. Turning quietly to José, he said: "Go forward and tell the captain the Marquez de Las Cumbres wishes to hold a parley with him, *pundonor*"—on his word of honor.

José, drawing his sword and placing his *sombrero* on the point held aloft as a signal of truce, rode forward in full confidence. He gave his message to the chief, who, having an assurance *pundonor*, returned with José. With a thousand bows and compliments he informed the Marquez it was only with great regret he had to relieve him of his purse and whatever jewels he might have about his person, keeping his spirited charger in the meanwhile in perpetual prancing motion near the nobleman.

"*Señor Capitan Don Pablo*," replied the Marquez, for he recognised the famous bandit, "*Señor Capitan*, I will deal fairly with you, as I am in too much haste to-day to waste precious hours in an unprofitable battle with your company. How much do you demand?"

Don Pablo, not disconcerted by the coolness with which the question was put, caused his animal to perform a *cari-col*, or passage, which brought him close to the Marquez, to reply in a soft, deferential tone, as though asking a favor: "Twenty ounces, señor Marquez," while the robber's horse leaped sideways to the further edge of the road.

The nobleman shook his head in dissent to this proposition. "I am afraid, Don Pablo, you will find but few travelling with twenty gold ounces in their pockets."



"If it is at all inconvenient to his excellency, we will wait upon him at Santa Inez for the amount. His word is sufficient; all the world knows it."

The Marquez extended his hand to the bandit in amity, which Don Pablo seized and shook with much satisfaction. Then making a signal to his men, they immediately came up.

"And now, Don Pablo, I want some information. Tell me is the pass above at Apantepec watched or guarded to-day?"

"It is, your excellency, by a party waiting to capture a lady."

"Who else is upon the road, *señor Capitan*?"

"Don Nicolas, of Santa Lucia, is now ten leagues in advance of your excellency, riding with the *Cabeza Negra* at a loose rein."

"Their numbers are formidable," exclaimed the nobleman; when, with a sudden thought, he turned to the bandit. "Will you join in her rescue for fifty ounces?"

"It would be an honor," exclaimed all the robbers, "to serve under the banner of Las Cumbres."

"*Adelante!*" cried the Marquez, plunging the spurs into his horse's flanks. "*Adelante!*" they all responded. "Onward, onward!" cried the cavalcade, as a cloud of dust marked their rapid flight. They rode with furious speed through a *pueblo*, scattering right and left a *procecion* of priests bearing the host to a dying sinner. At a hamlet of beggars, some without arms, some without legs, without eyes, some with heads larger than their bodies, some bent double with disease, some with senile decrepitude, some infant cripples, some covered with sores, some with limbs swollen to elephantine proportions, some shrunk to mummies; and all whining "*por el amor de Dios*, for the love of God,



charity." The cavalcade rode on the *leperos*, rode down the whole tribe of Lazarus, regardless alike of their begging invocations as they approached, and their clamorous imprecations as they left them behind, with the cry of "*ad-e-lan-te!*" They leaped a ford at a bound—" *adelante!*"

They rode by the ever open church-door without touching their hats; in passing the wayside cross they uttered no *ora pro nobis* for the departed soul. They made no holy sign in sight of the tombs in the *campo santo*; they asked no blessing from the hermit under the rock; nor did they leave him alms. "*Ad-e-lan-te!*" was their only cry; "*adelante!*" as they spurred on; "*adelante!*" as they gained the hill-top; "*adelante!*" splashing through the brook below. The long train of *carga* mules, each tied to the tail of the one preceding, strung out in single file, turned from the road at the sound of "*adelante!*" The *tlacatillas*—*peons* carrying burdens on their backs—saw the rolling cloud of dust advancing, and at the shout of "*adelante!*" stepped aside in wonder, as the armed horsemen furiously swept along.

The high crest of Apantepec was gained; their lances couched, they rushed forward, the Marquez leading with drawn sword flashing in the sun. But they stopped short in silent amazement. The bleak spot was vacant; the cold, piercing wind blowing from the *volcan* was only heard in a moaning wail among the tall pine-trees. Not a sign of animation was visible. Where they anticipated the deadly strife they found a solitude. The bandits walked their horses in every direction to discover some marks of foot-prints, and perhaps of violence. But no tracks of mules going forward were observed. It was evident the lady with her attendants had not passed.

The Marquez was at a loss for a solution of the mystery.



He dismounted to compose his thoughts, leaning his back against a high clay bank through which the road was cut. "Can nothing be found hereabout," muttered he, "to dispel this horrible uncertainty, worse than the most fatal truth?"

Slowly a long, shrivelled bone of a skeleton arm was protruded from the earth-wall at his side, and the feminine whisper of a beggar's supplication, "*por el amor de Dios, señor amo caridad, caridad*"—charity, charity, for the love of God, in the name of the Virgin and all the saints in heaven, martyrs in our Saviour's bosom; *por el amor de Dios*, for the sake of the Father, Son, and *Espiritu Santo*.

The Marquez on turning round perceived through a small aperture a miniature chapel or oratory excavated in the yielding clay, the further extremity within being adorned with mountain flowers, and lighted with burning candles before the holy image.

"What is this?" he asked of Don Pablo, who at the moment came up.

"It is the shrine of Our Lady, the holy Virgin of Apantepec, and there is the old mother of charity, Sister Teresa, once more on the mountains with her *remedios* for muleteers. I thought she was dead long ago," answered the robber. Then turning to the toothless hag gracefully, he removed his *sombrero* in a low salutation, as he exclaimed, in a whining voice, intended no doubt for seraphic sweetness: "Your blessing, *mamacita mia*, my dear mamma, all the *arrieros* pray for you bringing them salves for their wounds and herbs for their fevers."

Sister Teresa, however, with outstretched skinny arm and with closed eyes, heeded him not in her drone for charity—" *por el amor de Dios y todos los santos, caridad, caridad.*"



"Give her some money," whispered the robber. "She is the most knowing of the sisterhood among the mothers of charity. She can tell you all about the lady."

Instantly the Marquez filled her fleshless fingers with small silver coin, when the old nun, opening her eyes, worked her shrunken gums in frightful satisfaction.

"I know; señor, your purpose," said she. "Diego crossed the *cumbre* by the old fort, a path practicable only to few. He is now on his way to Tehuancingo."

"But where is Don Nicolas, *mamacita*?" eagerly inquired the robber.

"Santa Lucia and the *Cabeza* are in pursuit on this road," replied the mother, closing her eyes and crossing herself at the sinful thought of Sabina, whose name she would not utter.

The Marquez leaped on his horse at this information, and was once more in headlong speed down the mountain. Diego had been apprised by Teresa herself that the pass of Apan-tepec was closed against him, as she sat at the roadside awaiting his approach. He therefore turned to the right to climb through rocks on the brow of a precipice, where the least tripping of a mule would have thrown the lady lifeless into the yawning gulph a thousand feet below. The perilous path was, however, safely threaded by the sure-footed animals.

Diego hailed with joy the open ground beyond, as he hurried along, looking down in front to the pleasant valleys where they would find safety and repose. He avoided entering the main road, but followed a mountain footpath which ran along the stream leading down to Tehuancingo.

When Lulu pointed out to the lady the boundary marks of the community lands of the *pueblo*, her heart leaped for joy to



think she was drawing near to the point where her perils would end. She was now within a league of the village, and the road was becoming broader on the bank of the stream which rippled its deep waves at their feet. But looking forward, two shadows fell on the way before her, and the next instant the forms of Sabina and his hideous familiar the *Cabeza*, behind his master, confronted them.

Lulu gave a scream of terror, and fell from her mule. The *arrieros* fled for safety into the thicket on the river bank. The lady herself, dropping her reins, turned her eyes to heaven, imploring pity in her manifold sufferings. She found her way to the ground, and on her knees poured forth her feelings of woe in prayer. Sabina, dismounting, with folded arms, stood before her. "And you would escape me?" said he, with cold malignity. "That is now impossible. You must return once more to the convent to prepare for a sea voyage."

The lady made no reply. "Will you go without force?" asked Sabina. But no answer came from her. "Will you go willingly, I ask you again?" with his lips compressed over his closed teeth.

"Sooner would I go to my grave," said she, weeping.

"I ask you again, will you go?" he exclaimed, with fury, as Lulu crept to her side. The lady clasped her hands, and with eyes upturned, murmured: "Father in heaven receive my soul!" as the dagger of Sabina flashed in the light, and was in a moment buried to the hilt in her unresisting bosom. Foaming at his mouth, he drew forth the weapon to repeat the blow. But his innocent victim had sunk into the arms of Lulu, with the blood streaming from her wound. The pale hue of death came over her lovely countenance, and he saw his aim had been mortal.



Once more he folded his arms, while she opened her innocent eyes to gaze on the evening sunlight creeping silently up the side of the mountain. A wan smile came over her marble features, as she murmured: "Beautiful—all beautiful; and yet so full of misery. Father in heaven, merciful thou art for granting my prayer at last. I go to a better world—to my mother—mother!" Here she gave a piercing scream of agony at the thought of her absent parent, and the death-rattle came into her throat. Lulu laid her gently on the mossy bank and slowly closed her eyes in death. Her breathing ceased so calmly the good girl could not tell when her spirit passed away.

Lulu looked up at the scowling face of Sabina and murmured "*se acabo*," all is over. His eyes flashed fire at the remark, and with dagger once more drawn to despatch the girl, he rushed upon her with a yell: "You, too, you little *puta infernal*, shall not escape." Lulu ran under a mule to avoid the blow, and fled to a rock overhanging the deep river. He seized her light dress, which, from its frail texture, fell off in his savage grasp, leaving her naked to her short *camisa* as she leaped from the cliff into the rapid, rolling stream.

He drew a revolver from his belt, but before he could aim it at her floating figure she perceived his intention and sank under the wave. When she rose to the surface the swift current had borne her round the *vuelta*, the bend above the *alberca*, where she was shut out from sight or further pursuit. Reaching the shore further down, she ran to the *pueblo*, where the alarm was given, and as the mournful *tambor* sounded the signal of distress, the *peons* assembled in all haste at the unusual drum-beat.

Slowly all the inhabitants came forth in procession with



the village priest at their head, as they moved along the winding-path that led to the late scene of bloodshed. The *cura* raised aloud his voice, chanting the hymn of "Blessed are they who die in the Lord;" and the chorister youths joined in full responsive notes, while the villagers at intervals shouted a choral refrain, imparting a wild solemnity to the march. When they arrived at the fatal spot Sabina and his familiar were gone. The robbers in line with lances in rest pointing upward, and their small, red *bandarolas* flapping in the breeze, sat motionless on their horses. The Marquez was kneeling over the inanimate form as he wiped away from her pallid lips the clotted blood welling up from her bosom. His hat lay on the ground, and deep grief was depicted on his expressive features.

Branches of rosewood were hewn from neighboring trees, and the remains of the lovely lady, lovely even in death, were placed upon this sylvan bier. Again the procession renewed its onward tread back to the *pueblo*, where the dead lady would be watched and wept over until consigned, on the following evening, to the tomb. The good Father Anselmo arrived the next morning soon after sunrise.

When the last ray of the setting sun was gone, when twilight had melted into the deep shadows of night, the mournful procession moved, bearing her to her last home. First came youths with consecrated candles, followed next a band of music performing a slow march, succeeded by boys swinging censers with burning incense of the sweet-scented bark of the sacred sandal tree before the holy cross; then was borne the image of San Pedro, the patron-saint of the *pueblo*, on the shoulders of strong men flanked with torch-bearers burning the resinous *ocote*. Again came the boys swinging rich incense and bearing candles; then fol-



lowed the priests, friars, and neophytes in prayer. Next, upon a high catafalque covered with black cloth, reposed the dead lady, without a coffin, in white robes, with many wreaths of fresh flowers over her and an ebony cross upon her bosom. Her flowing hair fell loose upon her shoulders as she was carried forward; and, amid the transparent clouds of holy perfume, her beautiful, pale features could be seen wearing an angelic smile upon them. The villagers with torches and candles closed the long line of mourners.

On reaching the church they poured into the sacred edifice until the whole space was covered with the dense crowd. Mass was performed on the altar, and the other appropriate services for the dead. A portion of the floor was removed and the lifeless body was lowered into its grave. The Marquez looked down into the vaulted chamber below to take a parting look at the innocent victim buried among strangers in a foreign land. But the planks were soon drawn over her, and she was gone for ever from mortal sight.

The sacristan awaited with the register for the *cura* to write in it a minute of the death and burial. The priest seated himself at a low table at one side of the altar, and asked: "Who will tell me the name of the departed sister?"

A maiden approached with a piece of-cambric in her hand, on the corner of which was the lady's name. When the priest had entered it in the book he said aloud: "Her home when on earth?"

"New York City," was answered in a low tone.

"What more?" asked the priest.

"In ——th street, No. ——;" again responded the same soft voice, but so low and tremulous that the numbers were not heard. A maiden, however, repeated them to the *cura*, and they were written on the page.



“What more shall we add before closing the book?” proclaimed the priest, to be heard beyond the sacred edifice.

The good Anselmo, on his knees, was leaning with his burning brow on the cold marble slab of the altar. He elevated his eyes to the golden crucifix and groaned aloud, with large tears streaming over his cheeks: “Father in heaven, Thy will be done.” Rising to his feet he approached the priest and cried, in tones of a recording angel: “Write *how* she died?” Then seizing the pen, he inscribed some lines himself. Lifting up the register in his hands, he turned to the congregation, saying: “Listen, my children, as it has been written.

“Murdered, by Don Nicolas Sabina, of the hacienda of Santa Lucia.

*In witness,*

ANSELMO,

in God.”



## CHAPTER XXIX.

AN unusual attendance was observed in the club-rooms of Monsieur Leté. The Babes were in full council. The Foundling establishment for the destitute—those forlorn, forsaken youths, who, cut off from healthy employment, are dependent upon the charity of others for their daily amusement. Born to the inheritance of dollars and dulness, they know not what to do with themselves. But the first Saturday in November was their annual meeting for the election of new members; and with many it had the unusual excitement of being a day of business.

When the roll was called, all the members answered to their names. It was a large assembly of the youth and wealth of the city. Everybody was in a good humor, and everybody inclined to be witty, or the cause of wit in others by their smiling approbation of every juvenile effort. Walter Parker was there, having been, it was said, in the summer a month before at the Sulphur Springs of Virginia. Morton Burk was there, having returned, it was said, with the old lady Dowager from Sharon, when the cold weather drove them South. Mr. Sabina was there, after a missionary cruise for months in the West Indies, it was said, distributing flannel shirts and family Bibles for a Dorcas society. Even Nathan Trenk, newly elected, was there, having spent part of the summer at the Druidoaks, where, Walter Parker said, they marched to breakfast to the sound of the gong in Norma, and part of the time at Rockaway with Mrs. Russell and her children.

Several gentlemen were proposed as members, and some were carried without any division. But an uproar arose before the vote was taken on the admission of Mr. Harry Chester



and Mr. Fancy Bubble. A question of order, of rules, of law, a constitutional question, was started. One of them was too old, the other was too young. Chester was superannuated as "old" Harry himself, being upwards of thirty. Bubble was of too tender an age, just turned off twenty.

The members sat round or stood in groups, discussing the abstract questions upon which their admission depended. Walter Parker, as representing "all the talent," had a large circle for an admiring audience. He was opposed to Chester, as too old—too old by three lengths of an almanac. "Why, he has actually made his own fortune, which clearly proves he is not entitled to any relief from this charitable institution for helpless infancy. He cannot be admitted without undergoing quarantine with the inspection of a sanitary committee. Who knows but he may be afflicted with the chronic rheumatism, with the gout, lumbago, and long stories, any one of which would disperse the cherubs, or give them a new set of senile diseases before they were convalescent of croup and the measles, whooping-cough, cholera infantum, and copper-toed shoes." The learned gentleman, having received unbounded applause, proceeded to the second head of objections—that Chester was rich, and, for the speaker's part, he disliked rich people. To be sure, he must admit that when he added fifty or seventy-five thousand a year more to his own present annual income he would be rich himself. But that was beside the question. At this present moment he was not partial to rich people; and he knew the Babes, generally, had similar amiable feelings to that class, for whom no salvation was vouchsafed. They could no more be admitted into this institution than into Abraham's bosom. It was the loud wail from their injured offspring which would exclude them from Paradise. Not that he, or others around



him, had any wish to stop them from going there as soon as possible. Every one here had some especial grievance against this odious caste, the rich. They were the cause of universal destitution of funds among his fellow-members and fellow-sufferers. No one here ever had enough of money, nor half enough, for that matter. It was all owing to the want of proper Christian parental feeling. A combination would be made, a strike among these old fogies to break up this charitable asylum if they knew of it. "They are our natural enemies, and I hate them," said he. "Let all the children here present remember my words, when they say their 'Now-I-lay-me-down-to-sleep,' to-night."

Mr. Parker added some more last words, which met with decided approbation from an admiring, cheering circle; but the above is the substance of his indignant, eloquent outburst. In truth the orator wished to hear what Mr. Burk, who represented the "moneyed interest," had to say against Fancy Bubble's admission. But Mr. Burk was not in an eloquent mood. His objections, therefore, were not many, nor forcible, nor witty. Moreover they were soon brought to a close, perceiving the members' minds made up to reject Fancy. An excuse only was required to exclude both of these nominees, who in all probability were not aware their names had been presented to this secret and select association.

Neither Fancy nor Chester was of sufficient stainless pedigree or gentility to be admitted without question. It was, therefore, only a ruse to exclude them under the rules without resorting to the black-ball, which generally gave some umbrage to the members proposing the admission of friends. Young Fancy Bubble was the pet of his widowed mother. His father had been a famous Bull in Wall street operations in stock. He made his fortune in a sudden inflation in the



market. He would have lost it all in a subsequent sudden depression. But he was seized with a paralysis on the news of the fall in the quotations, and died without any settlement of his losing contracts. Young Bubble, therefore, had an immense fortune, but nothing else to recommend him.

Harry Chester returned recently from China, where he was consul for several years. He had been successful in his speculations at the Antipodes and came back immensely rich, supercilious, and purse-proud. He belonged to an old family of the city on his mother's side; and carried all before him on his return among the Knickerbockers, until he received a check in a ballot for admission to the leading club. How the fact became known that his name had been canvassed at all was a mystery; for a ballot is seldom divulged, if ever. But it was supposed Chester had talked of it himself, as, in an imperious mood one day, he demanded the reason from a quiet member, who was absent at the time of the rejection, whom the China consul felt disposed to browbeat in his ill-humor. The gentleman replied that, when he understood the cause, perhaps he would inform him. At the next interview, Mr. Chester was referred to Mr. Nevil for further information, the member declining to say more on the subject.

The Babes were not favorably impressed with the manners of Mr. Chester, or else, perhaps, the question of age would not have been applied. It is true none could be legally admitted who were thirty years old; but one or two had passed who might have been rejected on that point had objection been made. The object of the rule was to get rid of many who would not be congenial to the younger members, and in fact soon change the character of the club. With all the care taken, however, some gained entrance through their wealth, whose social qualities and family standing would not have



furnished sufficient recommendations had they been better known.

The business of the club was dispatched before the Babes thought of dining, and many of them left long before sundown. Morton Burk intended spending the evening in the Bowery with the Rose-Bud and Major Waywode. Sabina went home to dine with his aunt, as she had engaged him for her escort in the evening to a meeting of a benevolent society, where an interesting lecture was anticipated from a young clergyman, on "the influence of mothers." Walter Parker remained to dine in the saloon with some friends, and Nathan Trenk was invited by a small party in one of the private rooms of the club.

Nathan was in high health and spirits. He was the happiest of all the "Babes." The last year had been one continued series of success in his profession and in the increase of his income, while his entrance into society at all times and in all places was a perpetual ovation. Fortune, legal reputation, social popularity, placed him at the pinnacle of youthful ambition. Young and still more handsome than ever, dressing with most exquisite taste, which well became his graceful, pleasing manners—to heighten the fascination of his accomplishments what more did he want? Nothing, nothing. He was almost satiated with playing the lion in the social menagerie.

He had therefore flown to the Druidoaks for repose, partly in gratitude to the banker's wife who had been his early friend. The warm smiles of fortune expanded the finer feelings of his heart. He returned joyous to those for whom his first attachments were formed. His attentions and kindness to the novel-reading Norma were appreciated by the lady; for she well knew what fascinations he had foregone to come



to her bedside and amuse her with the little tattle of the world. When he told her he loved her dearly and tenderly as he would love a mother, she believed him, for she wished it; and, moreover, a sort of maternal affection for him was very strong in her own bosom.

When he left the Druidoaks he hastened back to town to take Mrs. Russell and the children to the sea shore, as the Doctor had recommended ocean-bathing for the little cripple Alice. How kind he was to the afflicted child, drawing her little carriage into the surf, and seeing she was not frightened as the waves came rolling in upon her. The boy Bob was not without his share of attention from Nathan; for the little fellow was rigged out in a suit of bathing clothes, and always ready at high tide to be carried into the water by him. The grateful mother could not express her overpowering feelings to Nathan; but, when alone, she would remember his unceasing, gentle attentions, until tears would come in her eyes, which she would wipe away in silent, heart-felt satisfaction.

If Nathan on this November afternoon was in a fine flow of spirits, his company at the same dinner-table with him were not. Four young gentlemen were his companions; for it was agreed they should have a quiet little dinner to-day to talk over some business matters in which they were jointly interested. These four young gentlemen and Nathan were the owners and freighters of the yacht *Theodolinda*, named in honor of the Hebe at the Club. The expenses for the sailing season had to be settled and paid, and they were low in funds. They had been for the last three months at Saratoga, leaving everything for Nathan to manage in the way of business.

With them the season had not been propitious. Before starting on their summer campaign they tried a "flyer" on



a choice fancy stock, just thrown fresh on the market. They purchased a thousand shares each, which, under the negotiation of Nathan, were procured at a very low figure—costing each of them some ten thousand dollars. The stock rose rapidly in value, and the young men, thinking it would go on rising for them to a mountain of wealth, left the shares in charge of Nathan “to nurse,” while they went off to the springs to have a jolly time on the strength of this new item to their incomes.

At Saratoga they soon tired of the common routine of amusements. They pronounced them tame and a bore. Wishing something more exciting, they attacked the “tiger”—a very wild kind of game for young men to hunt without the proper skill, encased in the most approved black leggings. They found the pursuit very expensive, as the ferocious animal took to that mountain of wealth which they fondly imagined was growing for them out of the fancy bean-stock in Wall street. They soon discovered their military chest exhausted which was to supply funds for the summer campaign. The four “Babes” in the mountains after the “tiger” were lost in the wilderness of figures. They were in debt eighty thousand dollars. Even Trenk, their man of business, was absent from them in their distress; for he, like a good robin red-breast, might give them, perhaps, a crumb of comfort or a few leaves out of his check-book to cover them.

The fancy stock had gone up from ten to fifty per cent. Perhaps they were still safe. But the roar of the bears during the night frightened the “Babes.” The grizzlies had cleared their mountain of wealth in Wall street; and the morning papers disclosed the fact that the precious investment, where they had garnered up their hopes, was gone, as



Mr. Dace, with poetic feeling, remarked, like the dew of the mountain, like the foam on the North River, like the bubble on a Broadway puddle—gone, and for ever. Now these four Gerards—not the famous banker, but the African tiger hunter—sat at the table at the Club with no more appetite than Cardinal Wolsey for a certain breakfast.

They knew themselves indebted to Nathan Trenk on a settlement of the Theodolinda expenses, and certain checks he had sent them were also unpleasant items to contemplate. But they did not wish to hear the items. It was the sum total due by each, and then for Nathan's opinion what property to sell so as to make liquidation. They were all honorable, kind, generous young patricians, who had now to cut into their patrimony, however unpleasant for their midsummer folly.

Harry Dace sat drooping with his feet wide apart, rapping the fragile top of his pipe-stem cane against his lower teeth. He could bear, he thought, the blowing-up a certain uncle would give him when he learned his parting with a house and lot. But that was nothing to endure when compared with the laugh against him in the Club, when all was known. In desperation to hear the worst, he exclaimed to Nathan, who was humming a new glee:

“Well, Mr. Trenk, tell me the figure I owe you on all accounts. The sooner over the better. What's the sum total I must pay?”

“Pay me!” asked Nathan, “pay me for what? You owe me nothing.”

“I mean what's my proportion of yacht expenses and the checks you sent me?”

“You forget, Harry,” said Nathan, “the fancy stock you left with me.”



"Well, what of that?" asked Dace. "It is gone, and if I had never touched it I would not now be in debt a dollar."

"In debt, Harry—to whom are you in debt?"

"To you, Trenk, in a pretty large figure."

"It is true, Harry, certain items are against you, but remember the proceeds of the stock cover them."

"Proceeds of the stock!" they all exclaimed in amazement. "Did you sell out for us?"

"I sold out all, all; my own along with yours at fifty, just before the turn came."

The "Babes" held their breath in gratified astonishment.

"We did not know that," cried every one.

"Nor did I intend you should know it till you returned from fighting 'the tiger.' The news by the steamer Europa made me bucolic in the fields of fancy stock, and I went the *taurus* for a prize at a cattle-show."

"What made you change?" asked Pactolus.

"The Northern Light came in ten days later with a cold breeze which gave me an Arctic shiver; I felt like a polar bear, and turned to that animal for a short cut, a north-west passage to the Indies—I sold."

Young Anthon bounded forward to grasp Nathan by the hand. The others followed a similar impulse and embraced him in their joy. Trenk had made them five times the amount of their capital invested. They were relieved from a load of debt, of family censure, and of the laugh against them at the Club. It was only two days before that, for something, three cheers were proposed in their presence and given, when Walter Parker rose to say: "Will the four honorable members, late from Saratoga, add—and the tiger." Only think of the horrible laugh which greeted this amend-



ment among the "Babes." Now they were free from that rub.

Now they could talk calmly and philosophically to their young friends about betting on faro—the tiger-fighting—at Saratoga. They could explain how the cards ran in their favor and how against them, and the "cool" thousands lost and won till they came out minus a mint of money. How they would have been "swamped," had it not been for a "sure thing" in Wall street, where Trenk kept them "posted," and where they sold just before "the bottom began to fall out." They gave Nathan, no doubt, afterwards, a full cup of praise for his part of the transaction, but the foam of glory on the top they poured upon their own modest heads, to encourage a new growth of stock-jobbing foresight, since they had passed the crisis in financial teething.

In the first glow of unexpected good fortune, where they had anticipated disaster, they resolved the yacht should be remodelled for the next season, with an expensive outfit to make her the most elegant and luxurious craft to be seen at a regatta. They attributed their good luck to the happy circumstance of a joint ownership with Nathan in the Theodolinda. What, then, was the consideration of a few thousands to each of them for the yacht, if Nathan could win ten times as much for them in a few months?

The night drew on, the cold rain fell in torrents, with some sleet and snow. The "Babes," with Nathan Trenk, therefore determined to remain at the club to spend the evening. In their high spirits they invited others to join them until the table was crowded with merry guests. Walter Parker had not, however, accepted their invitation, although pressed to unite with the "family circle." He left at dark, intending to spend the evening at home.



He found Emma Gray with his mother, with whom the young lady had passed the afternoon and dined. As it was now late for Emma to be abroad, Walter and Mrs. Parker escorted her home in their carriage, the weather not permitting them to walk. It was their wish to persuade Emma to attend a brilliant, much canvassed party, for which the invitations were out, to come off in the course of a few days. But she was depressed in spirits and would not promise. They sympathized in silence with the pretty, poor orphan girl in her lonely condition, and pitied the sad fate to which she was doomed.

The gentle kindness of Mrs. Parker was grateful to the feelings of Emma, who could only press the hand of the widow in thanks for her sympathy. It was evident that sorrows and trouble were coming upon the orphan without a friend in whom to confide, or from whom to expect consolation. Nothing is more affecting than the young and beautiful oppressed with anxiety and cares—when the morning of life is overcast with clouds, and when the evening may close in a storm of misery and desolation. Emma kissed the good lady before leaving the carriage, and as they drove from her door, she felt distressed with a sense of her isolation from all loving kindred, from parents, from brothers and sisters.



## CHAPTER XXX.

WITHOUT one smiling face to welcome her return, Emma Gray entered her cheerless home. The rooms were vacant, cold, and gloomy. The fires were neglected, and only one dim burner of gas sent a flickering ray along the hall. Her aunt was confined to her room, where she requested not to be disturbed. The orphan girl, therefore, crept slowly up the stairs to her own apartment, to pass away the solitary hours before retiring to bed.

Her uncle was not at home, nor did she expect to see him. He was not fortunate in business, for certain bills, presented more than once, would have been settled had he not been in great want of funds. The inference was, that her uncle had met with misfortunes, the knowledge of which he had concealed from her. His airs of abstraction, his hurried manner, indicated his time was not at his own disposal, nor his affairs prosperous.

Poor Tantis was in great want of money; although he struggled hard to conceal the fact in Wall street. Possessing some business experience and quite fertile in inventive resources, he was cunning—more cunning than a man of sense. When he proposed a negotiation to others, they had less doubt of its success in his skilful hands than in their reaping any of the benefit. They thought Tantis could not only make money, but would keep it also for himself when it was made. For this reason his proposals were often declined.

He obtained that unenviable notoriety which is known as “slippery.” Therefore, only a certain class of speculators countenanced his participating in their business transactions, which they did for the purpose of taking advantage of him



on the first opportunity. They knew if anything was said, everybody would suppose Mr. Tantis was in fault, and his side of the story never have an impartial hearing. When he, therefore, complained of unfair dealing on the part of those with whom he was operating, he was only laughed at and recommended "to be ahead" himself next time.

Numerous promises and inducements were held out to him in the event of success in negotiations then pending, if he would contribute his time and talents to forward the objects. Consequently Tantis was quite zealous in promoting the enterprises agitated for the more rapid development of the wealth and resources of the American continent. At one time he would be deep in coal mines, copper rock, lead veins, and zinc deposits. Again he would, like Sardanapalus, create cities and towns in a day, sell lots in them, and erect academies, found universities, dedicate churches, and promote the fine arts by a liberal allowance for an opera-house, in these architectural structures on paper.

Canals, railroads, steamers, and turnpikes, were all in turn improved and increased by the vigorous application of his mind to these facilities for locomotion. Even the agriculturist might be thankful for his attention to the beds of marl, lime, guano, and phosphates, with which he proposed enriching the land. His inventive genius also was employed in lecturing to a select few, having money to invest, on the advantages and profits to be derived from the various model mechanical or scientific improvements recently patented under our all-wise government at Washington.

In the multiplicity of his various avocations, Tantis sometimes made a little money, which he immediately applied to sustain the reputation of some noble enterprise, by purchasing shares of its stock on time, and then exercising all his art,



ingenuity, and volubility to enhance the price. Sometimes he would deem a corporate undertaking unsound, unprofitable, and fraudulent, whereupon he would sell some of the abominable "trash" on the same terms, and proceed, in the benevolence of his patriotic and philanthropic disinterestedness, to prove and prophesy to all that the "rotten concern" would fall to pieces in a month, and would make no sign in the way of a dividend. He was a prophet.

Prophets are, however, without honor in Wall street. There are too many of them in that locality. In a Scriptural sense, they all belong to the same class, and may be taken for those false soothsayers whose coming is foretold, and whom the elect are warned to shun. The prophecies of Tantis had of late proven fallacious; he had suffered, of course, with those who believed in the same chapter of the same book of revelations. His reputation for sagacity had not improved down town; and as his sources for home supplies gradually dried up, his pressing necessities became revealed to those creditors having little bills against him.

Some of these claims had not been paid when sent in. Renewed applications for payment were made in tones and terms neither gentle nor complimentary. Occasionally poor Emma was afflicted when in the hearing of these disagreeable altercations. Indeed, some of the petty creditors made direct appeals to her for the amounts due to them. These became a cause of new anxiety and distress to her, which she could neither shun nor remove. Of late they had been increasing, and occasionally the applicants were insulting in the language with which they pressed their demands.

On this wet, cold, cheerless evening, when she reached her room and lit the gas, she found an open note on her workstand, addressed to her uncle, which she supposed had been



sent up stairs for her perusal. The contents not only shocked but alarmed her for the consequences threatened. A bill of sixty-four dollars was due a millinery establishment, the proprietor of which had either failed or assigned the claims against her customers to a Jew in Chatham Square. The broker had written to inform Mr. Tantis if the amount was not paid that day, or on Monday, he would proceed to advertise for sale all the unpaid bills, in which he would specify names, items, and amounts.

Poor Emma was mortified and in despair at the thought of such public exposure of their improvidence and poverty. Looking, in her innocence and strict probity, on debt almost as a crime, or at least sinful, she wrung her hands in despair as she wept in the agony of her soul. She submitted in all humility to this new cause of sorrow, added to the load of her other afflictions with which she was burdened. For this was no remedy; she knew not where to fly for relief or alleviation.

She bowed her head upon her workstand and wept in silence, until she found some comfort in prayer to her heavenly Father to guide her properly in the trials now before her. The orphan child had only Him to call upon, as she seemed cut off from all ties of kindred to aid her in her distress. She resolved to submit resigned to this harsh proceeding, to accept it as an affliction sent for some wise, good purpose to check aspirations of pride, to chasten a rebellious spirit against her lowly lot in life.

When she looked up from the table Rosey had entered the room, and stood before her with pity and sorrow depicted in her pale, benevolent countenance.

"Emma, my dear, what is the matter, you are crying so?"



"Only look here, Rosey," handing her the threatening letter; "a man in Chatham Square says he will publish us in all the newspapers and sell his bill by auction."

Rosey read the note carefully, and ascertained the items of the accompanying account.

"Do you think, Emma, he will be so mean as to put in the papers that you owe him the bill?"

"Yes, Rosey, I am afraid he will; and only think how it will injure and disgrace uncle. He made me get the articles and work done, some time ago, when he told me he would pay the bill. Now he is not able, it seems, and I am miserable. It is sinful." Emma could say no more in her sobbing.

The woman had no comfort or consolation for this new cause of trouble. She had never known a sorrow before arising from such a source. In her perplexity she knew not what to suggest to Emma. She could say nothing. She therefore stood in silence, looking mournfully upon the distressed orphan whom she loved with all the affection of a mother. At last she took up her basket from the floor and departed, leaving Emma neither relieved nor consoled by her visit.

The rain was still pouring down upon the street, while the sleet, mixed with snow, blew in the face of the laundress as she gained the pavement from the area of the basement. But in her coarse garments and heavy shoes she splashed over the wet crossings, only pulling the thick shawl closer around her person, or taking a shorter grip on the handle of an old cotton umbrella. On she went in silence, till she had left all the fashionable streets behind her; on she went till she sought shelter from the slush, the sleet, and snow, in a large corner grocery.



The owner of the store recognised her on entering. But she did not feel inclined to stay.

"I want you to give me some money," said she to the man.

"How much?" he asked, pulling open his money drawer.

"I want to know first, what amount you have in there?"

"Oh, for that matter," answered the man, laughing, "I can let you have a hundred dollars if you are going to buy a house or horse to-night."

"Well, give it to me," she said, slowly.

"What, a hundred dollars?"

Rosey nodded an affirmative. The grocer counted out the sum in gold and handed it over the counter.

She carefully recounted the money, then tying it in the corner of a red bandana handkerchief, turned away without even a retiring salutation. Slowly wending her steps in the storm to Broadway, she entered an omnibus going down town. Seating herself in a corner furthest from the entrance, she found her skirts were dripping wet as well as her stockings and feet. The omnibus, however, was without passengers, and she sat alone, shivering in the cold and rain blowing through a broken window.

Soon, however, others entered, ladies and gentlemen gaily dressed, in cheerful mood, hastening down to the various theatres that line this brilliant thoroughfare of the city. They looked with pity upon the poor woman with the basket, meanly clad, who sat shivering with wet and cold in the corner—and, as the ladies thought, with a most horrid bonnet on her head. Where could the poor pitiable object pick up such a shabby bonnet—one of the greatest calamities of poverty! They felt a sympathy for the freezing creature, who, from cruel necessity, had to be abroad in such inclement weather "with



*such* a bonnet." Could these beings have any comforts or happiness in this world? There was a tear, a tear of distress, no doubt, in the sad woman's eye. What hard times the poor must have with want staring them in the face! Perhaps she has no fire at home this stormy night. What a bonnet!

Such were some of the natural thoughts which arose in the minds of her fellow-passengers as she sat in silence by the broken window. Rosey, however, paid no attention to them. Her mind dwelt on other subjects, the unwonted excitement of the evening having recalled a long train of agreeable and yet mournful reminiscences. In her memory a scene was fresh where a poor young girl from Germany lay on a sick bed, of ship-fever, in a low, dirty immigrant boarding-house. Four beds were in that small room, without curtains at the windows to shade the light of a hot summer sun, or carpet to cover the unwashed floor. While helpless at sea, she had been robbed of her clothing and small pittance in money; her sister a passenger, was buried in the ocean. Here, in a foreign land, she was alone without one acquaintance or friend—feeble, sick, and destitute. A burning thirst is in her parched mouth, a racking pain in her throbbing temples, no one to relieve her, no one to give her a cool drink, no one to call upon even in death.

The door is opened and a person enters. Is it only an aged gentleman, or an angel of light, so benevolent in features, with a heavenly smile upon his lips, dressed with elegance in the finest, richest clothing. But the poor woman about whom he has received a letter is dead—died the day before at the hospital. He turns to the hard bed, with dirty sheets, of the helpless immigrant girl, and oh, the horror of that girl, to know she is seen in such a condition—she who had been brought up at home in Faderland to reverence



cleanliness as a vital element of life, as a virtue, as a sacred commandment—she to be seen unwashed, uncombed, with unchanged clothing for many weeks, with the wrinkles of squalor on her head, on her neck, on her hands! Shame brought the blood to her cheeks, to her ears, to her forehead. No pain was felt except that agony of shame.

The poor immigrant child could not speak; she held forth her paper in silence, with trembling hand—the letter from her religious pastor of the little hamlet from whence she came. It was her all—all she had to plead for her. The venerable gentleman took it from her emaciated fingers and read it slowly, although in German. Another sweet smile beamed upon his countenance, as he said in her own beloved tongue: “I have been in your village. I have heard this good man preach to his little flock, and he declares in this you are one of the best of his people.” What more he said or did she knew not—she had fainted away. But when the girl opened her eyes again he was bearing her, all soiled as she was, in his arms, with her face resting on the soft, snow-white frills on his breast, with his delicious breath mixed with her hot fever, bearing her to a bath-room where some women were in attendance.

Then she remembered being again in his arms, borne to a carriage, which she entered, to lean on his shoulder while he supported her till she swooned with weakness and languor from the effects of the bathing. Where did the poor immigrant awake from this insensibility? She was in a cool, downy bed, in a beautiful room, with the most comfortable furniture. A lovely lady sat at her side, with soft hand upon the poor girl’s throbbing brow; and when the destitute stranger opened her eyes, she found herself dressed in the finest, whitest night-clothes, lying on clean, fresh linen sheets.



The kind lady gave her some drink—refreshing, cold as ice—to assuage her burning thirst. She felt the girl's pulse, she smoothed her pillow, and once more placed to her lips the pleasant, cold liquid. The fever was gone, but the poor sufferer was too feeble to rise; some light food was prepared for her. The physician came to cheer her with the hope she would soon be able to work. The venerable gentleman was much with her, bringing roses and flowers such as bloomed in her own garden in Deutschland; and cherries, large ox-hearts, such as she had sometimes tasted when a child.

And the beautiful little boy, more than two years old, came running into that sick-room after his mamma. When told not to make a noise, he pushed a chair to the bed and climbed up to kiss the poor sick girl. He crawled up to her lips and patted her wan cheek. He kissed her again and talked to her; but she could not understand his words, while she believed he said he would love her better than his nurse who had gone away. He nestled in her bosom and fell asleep on her arm. Even that child loved her; she, the squalid immigrant, only convalescent of ship fever, was beloved by that beautiful boy of the rich stranger, in a strange land, far away from her home.

That bright little boy, how he drooped afterwards when she was well and strong! How his little arms and legs shrunk to nothing, as if to cheat death of a corporeal victim, when disease slowly was drawing him on to the grave! Yet he loved her more as his infirmities increased, for she had taught him her own tongue, and he said his little prayers as she had lisped them when a child, which always brought back such sweet memories of her home; she could even now remember his childish tones in pronouncing the final *amen*.

But yet one painful, heart-rending reminiscence remained



—when it seemed that dear little fellow had but a few days to live, when he could scarce speak, when the lady heard her baby-boy lisp her name for the last time—the last time, for she never heard it again, the look of despair, of anguish, on that fair brow of the young wife, as her first-born faintly breathed her name, and then turned his beautiful eyes upon the immigrant girl-nurse with an imploring look not to leave him—so full of affection for her whom he loved even as much as his fond mother.

While Rosey was dwelling upon this sweet yet painful scene of former days, she espied the gas lamps in the Park around the City Hall. The other passengers had left without her observing them, and she was once more alone in the omnibus. Pulling the check-strap, she hurried out to a car running through Chatham Square, but, hearing the sound of something in her basket, she discovered the ladies and gentlemen had thrown in secretly several half-dollars, supposing she was in need of charity. They had observed the tears trickling down from her eyes on her pale cheeks, and felt a kind sympathy for the poor woman whose countenance indicated many good qualities of the heart. In their pity for her they had, without a word spoken among them, placed in the hands of one of the gentlemen the amount of their joint contributions, who deposited it in the basket at her feet.

She carefully counted the money thus given to her in charity before putting it in her pocket, and in a few minutes stepped out of the railroad car near to the shop of the Jew-broker. It was not long, however, before she was again on her way up town, bearing with her the bill, receipted, that had given the beautiful orphan so much distress.

“Here is the paper, Emma, which you wanted, and now you need cry no more about it,” handing the receipt to the



little lady, who sat in her cheerless and cold room on that evening of storm and gloom.

“Thank you, Rosey, you good soul. Where did you get the money to pay for this?”

“Your uncle will return it to me,” was the evasive reply of the woman, whose clothes were dripping with water. Emma read the receipt and sighed as she hoped her uncle would soon replace the amount it had cost her humble friend.

But Rosey, observing the orphan girl was sad in mind, in order to divert her, told her about the ladies and gentlemen putting the money in her basket. The story had its effect upon Emma, who was much amused at the incident.

Rosey wished to know if she were going to the party spoken of by Walter's mother, and when Emma expressed her intention to forego that pleasure, the kind woman insisted on her changing that resolution. A sensible view of the matter, and, above all, her persuasive energy, induced the little lady to yield to such powerful importunity, perceiving the laundress had already decided the point for her that she must go. It was thus always the young beauty gave up any purpose she had formed when the loving kindness and good sense of her more aged monitor thought differently.

The services of a dressing-maid were not wanting when the laundress knew not only the duties of one, but was willing and able to supply whatever deficiencies of toilet were discovered in emergencies. Rosey had now become an indispensable assistant in fitting her out for the many entertainments to which she was invited. Promising to come early, the kind woman took up her basket to return to her home, leaving Emma much easier in mind, with her cheerfulness restored. She was much happier now than when Rosey first arrived in the evening.



But the indefatigable laundress did not imagine her duties for the day all performed. She took from her pocket the silver coin given to her in charity, and entered a druggist's store to purchase several useful articles to invalids. She next stopped at a confectionery for some light bread and jelly. With these articles in her basket, she walked on through the rain-streams in the streets till she found the house near her own dwelling where a poor, sick immigrant girl was almost destitute, convalescent of the measles contracted on board the crowded ship.

The poor immigrant's heart was gladdened at the sight of Rosey's pleasing, quiet countenance, and, as the invalid was much better, she enjoyed the visit as well as the little delicacies so judiciously brought for her nourishment.

"What would have become of me," said the grateful convalescent, "if it had not been for you? God will bless you for this."

"The Almighty watched over me when I needed His keeping hand, and now I wish to acknowledge His goodness by helping others," Rosey replied, and then added: "But these things were not mine. They came from good, kind, benevolent persons of the city, who are always willing to aid the sick and destitute. They only sent them by me."

"I am thankful some few good people are in this city," sighed the invalid.

"Do not say some few, my child; say a thousand, or ten thousand. Don't believe those who tell you it is not so, for they do not know, or they are bad themselves. Good people boast not of their benevolence. But more is given away in this city to those in want than in all the cities of Europe put together. But here is some money left, as I did not spend all they sent by me."



## CHAPTER XXXI.

THE reception party, the long talked of reception party, the great sensation reception party, was given by Mrs. Slapdash, and Emma Gray was among her guests. Patrician with heavy purse, Mrs. Slapdash had found her way paved with smiles to the pure ethereal region of upper exclusive fashion. But Mrs. Slapdash was not satisfied with her proud pedigree and position. Mrs. Slapdash was ambitious withal, which brought her down to earth again, to expand her hospitable plumage with a come-and-admire-me fascination irresistible to the youth and beauty, wit, distinction, and wealth, wrinkles, powder, and paint of society, who flocked under her ample wings to adorn her upholstery, to admire her suppers, to adore her millinery, in one perpetual song of praise.

The town residence of Mrs. Slapdash, on exterior view, presented a brown-stone palatial order of architecture. The curbing on the street, the broad pavement, were of brown-stone ; the basement railing, the wide steps, the portico, lamp-posts, columns, colonnade, were all of the same material, as well as the external embellishments in lintel, frieze, and cornice, while zoological and horticultural sculpture exhibited deer, elk, dogs, lions, fawns, and lambs ; trees, vines, oak-leaves, and ears of corn dressed in a like hue of brown. One side of a city park or square was occupied through its entire length by Mrs. Slapdash with her mansion, its brown extensions resting on avenues, where railway cars gave easy, instant access from pleasant portions of the island and from rural villas beyond.

Mrs. Slapdash was content with her abode, with the space covered, with the imposing battlements of her smiling castle, where she could, as heretofore, make her power to be seen



and felt among rival potentates. Her preëminence was established before other noted fashionables had made their mark. She had witnessed the rising dawn of many, their meridian splendor, and their final sinking into obscure decay. Her greatness was enduring when modern opulence had often sunk into dust. Even now her sway is on the increase, and perhaps her fame will flourish when some "Arkansas traveller" shall take his stand in the midst of a vast solitude upon a broken arch of the Harlem High Bridge to sketch the ruins of brown stone.

Six blooming maidens, hand in hand, in the full flush of crinoline, entered her front portal abreast. Four matrons, in the spreading amplitude of personal development, stood before the same mirror to smile at their fair proportions reflected from foot to forehead. The drapery of the windows hung in the flowing festoons of mainsails on a ship of war; the cords and tassels were like unto silken cables tipped with burnished bombshells. The floors were a velvet prairie of Persian carpet, enamelled with its thousand wild flowers, a buffalo hunting-scene inwoven, the herd in flight chased by wild horses, savages, and wolves.

The waters of fountains rushed down rippling cataracts into marble reservoirs, embanked in lawns of roses and green moss. Artificial light shone through the double crystal casements of cream-colored stained glass. In one place morning dawn beamed through the transparent painting of Aurora in her chariot, with winged-footed steeds, with the attendant radiant, laughing Seasons. At another a blaze of dazzling brightness broke forth in mid-day effulgence. Further on twilight was melting away, as it ushered in the harvest moon, and again pale Cynthia and her train of nymphs, representing the fair, round orb of night, with myriads of twinkling



stars, shed down a silver glow upon a winter garden in bloom, where lovers might wander through winding mazes of verdure, amid luscious fruit and tropical perfume.

Music, with its heartfelt throbbings, invoked by a call of trumpet to the dancing hall, or floating on with rapturous swell from out the harp and cremona, prompted impulsive utterance of soul-stirring sentiment. Where the flute and violin poured forth a flood of melody, softer feelings inspired tongues made eloquent to whisper to listening ears thoughts that music, moonlight, and beauty could alone awaken.

To the banquet the band gave its enlivening sounds in strains in unison with the Apician adornments of the apartment: where the circling vine and clustering rose twined around alabaster columns; where festive garlands vied in splendor with the golden dishes with which they were mingled on the luxurious board; where floral wreaths and baskets of flowers in profusion were Mosaic inlaid with jessamine, japonica, and geranium.

Far within the building, in the palatial centre, the inferior halls paled their ineffectual attractions before the extent and grandeur of the Coliseum saloon of statues. Circular in form, a hippodrome in area, it would contain the metropolitans, piously believing in the divinity of point lace. Sacred to these, its hallowed precincts were never before profaned by the presence of that bifurcate addicted portion of mankind who apply the knife to the mouth in taking food, to cut themselves off from people of quintessent refinement. The walls, inclining inward and upward, rose culminating in the obscure to a dome far above and beyond the reach of vision.

To cleave this vault of darkness a hundred rockets were sent up to explode high in the vast canopy, revealing concave frescoes and jutting cartoons with which the inner sur-



face was encrusted. The blazing bubbles bursting and falling, ignited tubular rings holding burning jets to illumine the immense space with their circles of light. Could such awe-inspiring sublimity of art be surpassed in the superhuman contest for supremacy in the Eden of exclusiveness and celebrity? Yet Mrs. Slapdash felt herself mortal and aged forty-two; but at six paces distant she seemed a blushing maiden of sweet sixteen. Her anatomical altitude was only forty-seven inches; her weight was not much more in pounds avoirdupois.

Priestess at the shrine of fashion, she received her pilgrims in the Coliseum saloon of statues. Seated upon a dais raised to twice her height above the carpet, she represented the genius of the place upon a tripod. Her ample skirts, made of ballooning silk fabrics, air-tight and double, were covered with a gossamer lace that fell deep fluted in flounces to the floor. The hem of her garments communicated by means of a subterranean tube, with a gasometer from whence her train, receiving inflation, drew an immense circumference around her pretty person.

To the outer edge of this magic ring, encircling the goddess, the worshippers were permitted to approach in humble adoration; and the furthest confines of an empire sent their fair representatives to this throng of wealth and beauty. The sound of distant, novel harmony came floating through long corridors. Fifty instruments blown by heated vapor breathed their melody through every recess. And now the march began to the music of this invisible orchestra performing in slow time the song of *Liberta* in the *Puritani*. Then on came the fair daughters of Plymouth Rock; on came the lovely descendants of the Lowlands; on came the beauteous off-spring of the peace-loving people in drab colors; on came



the blue-eyed maidens of Rhenish Alsatian blood ; on came the rosy-cheeked children claiming kindred with Culloden ; on came the bright-eyed, mirth-inspiring, whose forefathers were exiles of Erin ; on came the frank, cherry-lipped beauties with family escutcheons of the Cavaliers ; on came the sweet-smiling brunettes, lineal heirs of the persecuted Huguenot ; on came the pensive, graceful Creoles, whose ancestors were of Normandy ; on came the blue-veined Andalusians of Hidalgo pedigree, proud of their clear complexions, free from Moorish taint.

But they came not alone. Fame sent her favorites to wait upon their footsteps. The poet, the painter, the sculptor skilful in his art, the successful in literature and science, were there ; the popular professor from the hall of lectures ; the renowned doctor believing in the millennium near at hand in the cessation of bloodshed ; the eminent divine attending to the business of everybody ; the celebrated lawyer attending to the business of nobody ; pastors for ever watching their flocks by day ; flocks for ever watching their pastors by night, went by in the passing crowd. The warriors by land and water who had borne their country's banner on every ocean, amid Arctic open seas to Antarctic polar snows, or planted it high in battle on sultry plains of the torrid clime, marched to the music in this new zone of enchantment. The great men of the nation were there, and the elect of the people ; Commanders-in-Chief innocent of squad-drill ; Adjutant-Generals yet to see guard-mounting ; Brigadiers who never drew a sword ; Commanders always sea-sick upon salt water ; Senators eloquent on the degeneracy of the age in the destruction of sealing-wax ; and even Common-Councilmen ever doing good—by stealth.

The vast throng was gone—gone to the ball-rooms, to the



banquet halls, to the bowers of the winter garden, to the boudoirs rich in India drapery. Revelry had usurped the place of the pageant; the Coliseum saloon of statues was deserted. The priestess sat alone upon her tripod, pensive yet triumphant. Her pale forehead rested upon a jewelled hand, while her seraphic memories were far away to think of one who dared to raise his eyes to mate with her in widowhood. In this saloon she had received him, where the very statues which adorn the walls frowned upon his temerity, when here she dismissed him. He was great in soul but diminutive in form. He had wooed anonymously in gilt-edged, pink-colored, laburnum-perfumed satin note-paper. She discovered his device. Why did he leave upon an envelope his crest unguarded? She knew it—Queen Mab, with ear-trumpet entranced by the music of a band of midges at their morning drum-beat round a homœopathic pill.

Here he had thrown himself at her feet; here General Thomas Theodore Digital avowed himself the author, confessed his intentions were honorable. With a smooth tongue and an enamelled shirt-collar, almost irresistible, he raised his voice and eyes in his audacity, but lost color and courage in the interview, to find safety only in silence. Petrified with a frown and with fear, he listened like a Lucifer fallen to his doom. “Though you, General Thomas Theodore Digital, are world-renowned, receiving the smiles of princes and presents of pony-chariots; though you are high on the scroll of the American Legion of Honor, a Brigadier-Commander in the grand encampment of militia heroes; though you have advanced to fame and the foot-lights on the historic and histrionic stage, know that you are presumptuous in your aspirations upon our domain, upon our empire. Go!” and she pointed with the gesture of the tragic muse, with outstretched



arm, with elevated finger, to a distant aperture for exit—  
“Go, and molest us no more. We reign supreme, we reign alone, resolved to remain vestal, consecrated to society and the silver fork.”

General T. T. Digital brushed the dust from off the knees of his prostrate pantaloons and departed.

Now she sat upon the tripod triumphant; all sensation receptions must henceforth fail before this mighty effort for supremacy. Slowly the lights were extinguished, and when the last ray was expiring in the embrace of grim darkness, she descended meekly and was once more Mrs. Slapdash again. Tripping quietly to the side of the old Lady Dowager in a tapestried apartment, she put a jewelled hand affectionately into her aged palm. They understood each other without a syllable. The silent pressure of fingers revealed to the little widow that her evening was a success.

In the immense assemblage, the familiar faces of the city beauties were lost in the concourse of a continent. The metropolis was here provincial. In this ocean of society friends met to signal each other like ships descried at sea. Nathan Trenk was left almost isolated. He saw one, however, who to him was more than all the other attractions of the night. Claudia leaned upon his arm and listened. He was eloquent because Claudia was his admiring, applauding audience. They roamed together through suites of luxury, saloons, picture galleries, and conservatories, thinking only of themselves and happiness. Near a Carian statuette of Daphne and faun some acquaintances had found inviting, luxurious divans vacant upon which to rest their wearied limbs. Walter Parker and Morton waited upon Emma and Helen Nevil.

“Look,” said Walter, “there come Mr. Trenk and Claudia,



a melancholy Jacques ; poor fellow, he seems to be seeking solitude !”

“Say, rather, Walter, he is the stricken deer flying from the herd.”

“It may be, Morton, no love is lost between them, as the play hath it. But, like turtle doves, the birds of Venus, they keep their eyes to the ground, picking up the very crumbs of comfort, perhaps, from the basket figures on the carpet.”

“Claudia and Mr. Trenk !” murmured Helen. “What talents and accomplishments are united in the two.”

“Too many for domestic purposes, Miss Nevil,” said Walter. “I fear they will never be lulled to connubial repose by the melody of the same tea-kettle.”

“Why not ?” asked Helen. “Surely, Claudia is his equal in everything save—” and here she looked after them, slowly moving onward in the crowd.

“Save one thing, Miss Helen, you would say ?”

Miss Nevil slightly blushed, but was silent.

“Save beauty,” said Walter.

“You must not slander, sir !” exclaimed Helen, reproachful, with a smile.

“If I do, I can pity, especially one of the softer sex.”

“Do you know her well, Mr. Parker ?”

“Slightly. I never could pass the fatal picture.”

“Let me then speak for her,” interposed Helen, with animation, which heightened her transcendent loveliness as she spoke. “Let me speak for her. She is perfect, except in color. Her mind is cultivated beyond the scholarship of most scholars ; her talents are improved beyond accomplishments, till they are sciences. Her moral culture, her generous heart, her feminine tastes, her fine sensibility, are each rare virtues in themselves. In her person she is beautiful,



tall, of exquisite shape, graceful as a fawn. Even her features are classic and faultless, without blemish, and beyond the criticism of a cynic. What, then, is wanting to make her the most lovely of her sex?" asked the beautiful girl, blushing crimson at her own eloquence.

"Complexion!" repeated Walter.

"Animation!" added Morton.

"These, you will admit, are her only defects?"

"All, we believe," answered both the gentlemen.

"Where, then, has one of us half of her attractions?"

"Yet not one lady here would barter her good looks for these," said Walter.

"But perhaps a gentleman might prefer them."

"Now let me speak, Miss Helen," interposed Morton Burk. "You have in a charming manner described Claudia, and justly. Far be it from me to disparage her in the slightest. Her want of a clear complexion makes her appear plain; her want of animation repels us by her apparent, perhaps not real, coldness."

"Do not gentlemen, in their attentions, extend only cold formality to her?"

"How could you suppose we would exhibit much interest in one where beauty was wanting?" Walter suggested.

"Then why find fault, gentlemen, with her defect of animation? Has she not eyes and a shrinking sensibility? Your manner would certainly not be inspiring to the poor girl."

"You believe, then, the icicle that hangs on Dian's temple might be melted?"

"Your dramatist is not a classic author in mythology," answered Helen smiling, amused at the odd conceit of Walter, as she moved away in the passing throng with Morton Burk.



"Why is it," asked Emma, who was left with Walter, "why is it the picture you speak of has such a repulsive notoriety?"

"For its artistic excellence, Miss Emma. It is, perhaps, the best painting ever executed in this country. The subject is, however, as you properly term it, repulsive. I cannot, for the life of me, imagine why a painter should sketch any scene that is not pleasing."

"What is this you are discussing so learnedly?" exclaimed the young and witty Mrs. Walters, approaching with Harry Dace and seating herself at the side of Emma. "Painting, madam," said Walter, "but do not frown; we did not mean to be personal."

"Who, then, was the object of your malevolence, if you wish me to believe you?"

"A lady in colors, of course—just out of second mourning."

"You might, in charity, Mr. Parker, suppose a lady laying aside her dark dresses and dismal sorrows should have color without artificial aid."

"In my innocence of such knowledge, madam, I imagined mourning the blessed portion of feminine existence."

"It is good to go to the house of mourning," quoted Harry Dace.

"To the house of mourning-store goods is the modern version," added Walter. "When every stripe, pattern, texture, color, quality, for morning, walking, driving, dinner, and evening wear has become hateful to the sight, a lady can find relief only in the grave—the grave of a friend. Then she can expend as much grief and gold as fancy and finances permit, to revel in the luxury of woe." Perceiving Mrs. Walters was amused, he continued: "On the stage, how they tear the passions to pieces in ranting and grimace. But at the store,



more graceful, they tear the pieces into patterns, being much more dexterous in the manipulation of the articles. Such 'little lambs of shawls' to cover a multitude of tribulations; such a 'darling beauty' of a cape, sinful to think about, but 'so' becoming; such a 'perfect duck of a bonnet' to paddle through a deluge of affliction. Sighs over black lace, tears over crape, groans at the price, and affected to fainting at visions of 'sweet' dresses in perspective."

"You are wicked, Mr. Parker. I won't listen to more," she exclaimed, half rising to leave.

"Restrain your impatience, madam. I know I am not half the Christian of your cousin with white choker, the Dorcas-loving Sabina. But it would be good for him to go to a mourning store. Weed's or Bartholomew's—impressive names suggestive of cemeteries. Let Mr. Sabina catch the mellifluous words of the beautiful clerks—they have always handsome young fellows, well-dressed, with extra yard-stick politeness. Their voices are intoned to suit customers." Looking round with a start, he cried: "What has become of Miss Emma and Dace?"

"Gone to enjoy the artificial moonlight, flowers, and fountains, no doubt," suggested the lady.

"To listen to some original poetry," said Walter.

"Is he an author?" she inquired, with much interest.

"To be sure he is," with one of his cynical smiles. "Did you not know it?"

"An author!" she exclaimed—"An author of what?"

"Well, the story goes, madam, he has written the late new novel of 'Hit Him Again—by William Patterson.'"

"If he surpass you in fiction, he must be a prodigy," replied the lady, rising. "But come, Mr. Parker, let us join in the promenade."



Morton Burk was standing near the banquet hall in which he had been enjoying an industrious hour, and now was free from the crowd, conversing with some gentlemen where a luxurious suite of small rooms was almost deserted. He felt his arm taken by a lady, and turning beheld Emma Gray, with a sweet smile at his side, looking up in his face. "How fortunate, Emma, that I have found you," leading her to a remote seat. "Fortunate, indeed, for I have been looking for you in vain."

"I thought you were more interested in other objects," Emma replied, with much animation; for she felt an unusual excitement in the brilliant scene.

"Still, Emma, I must think for my friends. Do you know what o'clock it is?" with a quizzical smile upon his lip.

"What have I to do with time, Morton, when I am enjoying myself now?"

"Remember, you wear to-night the glass slipper, Miss Cinderella; and home you must go before the clock strikes twelve."

"What is the penalty?"

"Overshoes and woollen stockings, a flannel bathing dress, a pumpkin, mice, and all imaginary misery."

"Heavy punishment, Morton; what have I done?"

"Calling on the fairies; and you know from authentic nursery books they are spiteful little witches."

"I hope no one envies me in this throng," exclaimed the little beauty, enjoying the covert compliment.

"No one, did you say, Emma? Everybody is talking of your toilette—beautiful, brilliant, rich in fine taste, gems, rose diamonds, seed pearls, bracelets, laces; and what more a hundred ladies only know."



"Tell me some of the ladies," said she, delighted, turning her dark eyes upon him.

"Mrs. Slapdash asked Mr. Trenk if your taste and turn-out were not superb—the prettiest in the world."

"And what did Mr. Trenk say?"

"He replied he never saw its equal; that all the ladies were in malicious ecstasies of jealous admiration."

Emma was now indeed in raptures with such encomiums, for she knew Morton was sincere.

"But" said he, "you had better go home before the fatal hour. Remember poor Cinderella; and I will keep it all a secret that you have had spiritual rappings with the elves, you little vixen."

"But tell me, Morton, do you yourself admire my taste and toilette this evening?"

"Indeed, Emma, it is most beautiful; by far the most exquisite I ever beheld."

"Then I ought to be happy when all my friends are pleased with me."

"Now tell me, Emma, where did all this wealth of wonders come from?"

"Guess," said she.

"Did you buy them? no! Borrow them? no! Pilfer them? no! Beg them then? no!"

"Guess again, Morton."

"A present? no! Did you find them? no! I give it up then. It is Cinderella over again. By the Piper, the pumpkin-eater, you had better go home, for the police will be in search of you."

"I must tell you, Morton, all about it. I was in great trouble for something to wear. Indeed I was not coming for that reason. I wished Santa Claus had finery in his basket



to help me, and I fell asleep after breakfast, thinking of my misfortune, when Santa Claus sent his wife to see me on the subject."

"Was she dressed in this toggery, Emma?"

"No, indeed; absurd! She had on Hessian high boots, a dozen of short, red petticoats, an old, large, straw bonnet—and such a bonnet, Morton!"

"Something like a deck-scuttle on a steamer?" he suggested.

"Something like that, but not exactly shining black. She bade me come with her to choose for myself."

"Of course you went. Feminine flesh and blood could not resist the offer from old Henry himself. 'Twas dress swindled Eve, fig-uratively speaking. Full dress is still rather fig-urative. But go on, Emma."

"She took me by the hand and led me, blindfolded, into a strange place where I had never been before. The chairs and tables, racks and clothes-lines, old trunks and open boxes, even the walls, were covered with all a lady could wish in dresses, laces, shawls, jewels, ornaments—everything imaginable. Pointing to a table, Mrs. Santa Claus said: 'Tere are the robe, and laces, and gems worn by a beautiful American bride at an ambassador's ball in Paris. It will suit for Mrs. Slapdash.' I thought it would do; but many, very many more were equally attractive. While I was hesitating which to choose, she pushed me out of the place, and I forgot to notice where I had been, my mind was so much occupied thinking on the display, until I found myself in my room again, and when I awoke these things were at my side."

"You were asleep, Emma."

"Indeed, Morton, it seems to me even yet only a delightful dream." They paused to observe an unusual scene.



In one of the spacious apartments near to them they could witness through the open doors the waltzing, where many foreigners had congregated. Although space was ample for those engaged on the floor, still the crowd of spectators was great. In an interval of the amusement, when the orchestra had ceased, a strange gentleman, of fine appearance and handsome dress, slowly walked up the vacant centre alone, with his right hand upon his brow as if to shade his eyes from the light. At the further side he turned and slowly walked back, without changing the position of his arm. Leaving the room, he passed and repassed through the banqueting saloons in the same attitude until lost to their view. But traversing various boudoirs beyond, much thronged, he kept on his way until, in a distant crowd, he felt his arm grasped, and a voice whispered at his back: "Enough; the signal is acknowledged." Dropping his hand without halting, he walked forward to a painting, in a massive frame, which hung upon the opposite wall, and with both hands behind him, he seemed to examine the piece with much interest. Slowly turning round he seated himself, as if exhausted and desiring rest. Charles Nevil soon after had taken a position at his side.

"Will you permit me," said he, addressing the stranger courteously in French, "to examine the gem you wear outside of your glove."

The foreigner raised his hand to the light with an air of indifference that seemed to repel any further advances upon his attention.

"I have seen its mate," said Nevil, after looking at the precious stone. Still the stranger made no reply. "The coincidence is singular," added Nevil, "of two similar of



such strange device." To this remark no response came from the unknown gentleman.

"Will you permit me to inquire if you have any friends in this city?"

The stranger made no answer, causing, however, no apparent surprise to his inquisitor; and they both sat in silence without further words for some moments.

"Will not my unknown friend explain to me," Nevil continued, "why he does not answer?"

"The crowd renders it improper." Thereupon Charles Nevil handed his card in silence, which the gentleman took and examined.

"Is Mr. Nevil a resident of this city?" To which question an affirmative answer being given, the stranger rose and left without even a parting salutation. But Nevil still lingered in the apartment. Some time after the Spanish Consul-General entered with the gentleman, and introduced him as the Marquez of Las Cumbres. The official, with the usual tact of his nation, immediately withdrew, perceiving they desired to confer alone.

"With your permission, Mr. Nevil, we will defer the precautionary signals of recognition until to-morrow."

"Upon condition, Marquez, that you permit me to examine now the jewel on your glove."

"Certainly, Mr. Nevil," said he, holding up his finger to the light as the gem sparkled in the blaze.

"Is that all, Marquez?"

The gloved hand instantly fell, and no answer made. Nevil having challenged a revelation of the mystic signals, further conversation was by the statutes interdicted until the challenge was met by the proof. The Marquez could decline to proceed; but while refusing he was not permitted



to speak to Nevil. Nor was Nevil allowed a greater privilege while the question remained open.

The Marquez was silent and attentive, expecting Nevil to remove the embarrassment, as these apartments were not a fit place for further disclosures. And Nevil was well aware of this when he gave the challenge. But it was given to put the Marquez to the test, as a reply would have revealed him an impostor. At last he approached the nobleman, and with a smile, said: "The question is withdrawn for the present."

"It is the first time it was ever put to me; and with your permission, Mr. Nevil, I would prefer postponing further discussion on the subject."

"I am happy to welcome you, Marquez, to our city, and hope your excellency will remain with us for some time."

"My affairs call me soon to the continent, and, in truth, I deviated from the direct route home to deliver some letters and to find some one of the order. I had forgotten the name of the one in this country."

"Is it an important matter, señor Marquez?"

"Is there a young lady of your name in this city?"

"Perhaps there may be," Nevil replied.

"My question is not answered, sir!"

"I have a sister, now a young lady," said Nevil, with suppressed anger, speaking through his teeth. "Who dares to mention her name with disrespect?"

The Marquez drew from his pocket a small ivory tablet, and handing it to Nevil, said: "That is her address."

Returning the tablet to the nobleman, Nevil asked if any danger threatened her at this time. The nobleman shrugged his shoulders. "Upon hearing the facts, Mr. Nevil can form his own opinion."

Helen was at the moment in the ball-room with Nathan



Trenk, where they had been waltzing. She was in a great flow of animation and enjoyment with the brilliant scene and moving panorama around her.

"Why do you persist," said she, with a laughing smile while leaning on his arm, "in calling her the Lady Dowager? You ought to be more respectful to one so venerable from her age and position."

"If you object, Miss Helen, to the title, I know none half so appropriate. She is at the head of our patricians, the metropolitan aristocracy; and I am sure Lady Dowager is a modest rank. Would you have me call her Countess or Duchess?"

"No, no, Mr. Trenk; we have no titles at all, and it is a shame to mock her with one."

"But then who would confer rank and distinction if we had not her to call dormant families to the upper house? She creates a batch of peers whenever her Ladyship wishes. Even to-night she has recognised several new names as worthy to be placed on visiting-lists of the most exclusive."

"Who are they, pray tell me?" asked Helen, much amused in her gay mood.

"I only know some of them, these new people thus elevated. But one of my acquaintance is made happy, Mrs. Laura, who could have kissed her wrinkled hand and knelt in gratitude to the venerable dowager for the recognition."

"How strange this is, Mr. Trenk, in her hunting up old names, like Old Mortality hunting up moss-covered tombstones."

"But it is nevertheless true, Miss Helen; so they tell me; for she does not know me, nor has she ever seen me. Mrs. Laura's grandfather was a merchant in the Revolution, who



trusted the army for supplies, and was ruined with the payment of Continental money never redeemed. He failed, of course. His family was impoverished, and now Mrs. Laura is the first of his descendants who could aspire to a position in society. She was deemed plebeian until this evening. Her old, proud, family escutcheon was found buried under several generations of nobodies."

"Then the Lady Dowager, as you call her, is useful to some worthy people."

"If conferring pleasure upon the deserving is usefulness, I think the old lady lives to some purpose," said Nathan, as they moved rapidly through the rooms in search of Charles Nevil. The company were now fast leaving for their homes, and Nevil, when found, was well pleased at his sister's proposal to call their carriage.

---

## CHAPTER XXXII.

THE next evening Nathan Trenk called upon Claudia. He knew he would find her at home and alone. The parlors were, however, deserted, nor was any sound forthcoming from the music-room or boudoir beyond indicative of her presence. He had, therefore, ample time to collect his thoughts for the interview, or to study once more the famous picture which hung conspicuously upon the wall of an inner room. It was a small painting, with a plain, black walnut frame. In the gilding and carving of the other rich ornaments around one would be attracted by its simplicity alone.



But the renowned picture was, no doubt, the work of a master. It represented a forest scene, a British officer of high rank wounded, sitting recumbent against a tree, holding in his hand a pistol that had missed fire, aimed at an Indian warrior advancing in war-paint and feathers. The savage wielded an uplifted tomahawk, and in his left hand was the fatal scalping-knife. The officer, a colonel of Colonial troops, an ancestor of Claudia, was bleeding profusely, as life seemed ebbing fast from him. But in his livid countenance were depicted hate and terror, with a despairing energy of passion convulsing his wan features with horror—horror so vivid, so life-like, that the painting was forgotten by the observer in the belief of the vision being a real scene at the moment.

The light was thrown into the painting with such skill by the artist that, as the observer breathed, it imparted life to the figures till he imagined the blood flowed from the wound; the extended pistol-hand trembled, and the eye of the soldier flashed with a flickering animation. But the passions on his ghastly lineaments appalled with a shuddering dread of impending danger. The spectator felt a chill coming over him like that which is caused by a terrific dream. He witnessed, in the most revolting aspect, intense passions stamped upon the marble features of a corpse. It was seldom a second view of the wounded colonel was desired. Once seen the picture was never forgotten.

The family legend transmitted of the artist was, that he had come to the Colonies in disgrace from England to avoid his creditors. His fame was high at home, but in his extravagance he resorted to disreputable expedients to raise funds. He had executed, it was said, an order for a painting with an exorbitant price at the instance of a nobleman forming a



private gallery, and produced a work much extolled in the exhibition of the Royal Academy. But he was tempted by a large sum to make a copy without the consent of the peer. This act of bad faith brought ruin upon him and he fled. In America he had accompanied the troops into the wilderness against the native tribes, to be present with the colonel on the memorable day when the soldiers were defeated.

The future career of the exile painter was not ascertained. But he left New York for France, while rumor reported he was seen at the foot of the guillotine, in the Reign of Terror, sketching the horrors of the basket into which the heads of victims fell severed by the remorseless knife of the revolution. His passion for depicting horrors would naturally lead him to that historical saturnalia of blood. The story rests upon the report that he was met there by George Selwyn, a noted wit of the London clubs, himself an amateur in the terrific. But as it is very doubtful if Selwyn or other Englishman ventured to Paris, even to gratify his inordinate passion for the sight of human suffering, nothing is authentic as to the future fate of the artist. His fame, however, for transcendent success in portraying mortal anguish, readily induced credence to this tale of his ultimate wanderings in search of the tragical.

Claudia was of patrician descent; but the family was now no longer opulent. She was the only surviving child of her widowed mother. They were gradually losing their position in the front rank of distinguished houses, from the inflated wealth of plebeian names around them, eclipsing their modest merit and long pedigree in the more shining attractions of their cash-books. The respectable in the metropolis are estimated by what they are worth in commercial admeasure-



ment. This is the only received standard of weights and measures among these worshippers of the golden calf, and the image of that sanctified animal among them is of colossal size. In a World's Fair of such quadrupeds New York would gain the prize for the most approved breed of universal admiration.

It is idle to repine at fate, and when power has departed it is useless to mourn for the loss. The mother of Claudia was too sensible not to perceive the downward tendency of the times to a reverence for gold dust. Ambitious for success, she followed the popular current. Her hopes for renewed splendor and renown were in a proper alliance of her daughter. To this end, Claudia's education was undertaken with all the zeal and unremitting attention bestowed on a novitiate for the ballét or lyric stage. She exhibited rare talents as a child ; her well formed person promised future beauty ; her mental improvement kept pace with her physical training. She was artless and graceful, her manners simple and winning. She was all her mother wished her to become. In return, Claudia loved her parent as excellent mothers deserve from their children. Above all, the daughter had imbibed her ambition.

But one fatal perceptible defect remained. Claudia's color was not good ; her complexion was pale, of an ashy hue. It was said by medical men that this would pass away, as it was attributable to a want of perfect health. It appeared at this time, however, to be permanent and incurable. Its effect upon the young lady's fortunes and distinction in society was soon felt. With all her superior talents and training, she was not a favorite. In truth, the attentions she received were soon perceived by her to emanate from politeness alone. This discovery chilled the natural warmth of her disposition, nor



did she desire to make friends by other than proper means. As a wit she might have been brilliant, even as a musician she was almost unrivalled, but neither wit nor music would confer the prestige at which she aimed.

It was through her accomplishments she became known intimately to Nathan Trenk. Their congenial tastes made them reciprocally attractive. When he forgot by constant association the homeliness of her face, he was not insensible to the exquisite symmetry of her person, and soon perceived the brilliancy of her mind along with the beauty of her moral character. They became the best of friends, while Claudia had even a more tender feeling for him without being aware of it. Her attachment was perceived by Trenk; for a gentleman, if he is not a fool, can soon fathom a lady's mind upon that point when she is unguarded.

He was too sensible, however, to care much for the discovery. He was pleased, to be sure; but still he pitied her, as it was not requited. Is a gentleman certain of his feelings when he pities a lady? Let him not be too sure of his ægis of pride and vanity. Pity has made as many conquests as beauty. A gentleman is forearmed against loveliness; but against the sentiment of pity he is not forewarned; he nourishes it and caresses it in his bosom until it becomes a pet difficult to part with. He would be ashamed to confess the robbery of a poor, plain girl's affections; it is no crime while unknown, but, like the Spartan theft, in the concealment the object eats into the heart. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor the best match for the greatest belle.

If Claudia had been taken to task by her mother for her growing attachment to Nathan, do you imagine she would have denied the charge? Not at all; she would have frankly



confessed, or what she thought was a confession of the facts in the bill of indictment. Certainly she was attached to Mr. Trenk—one so agreeable, fascinating in his manners, well-dressed, fashionable, accomplished, rich, and the popular rage among the ladies. How could her mother imagine she was not smitten with him? He was so delightful, enchanting; and then, mother mine, in waltzing with him you swim, you fly, and feel your skirts inflated. The same in music; you can make no false notes, keep no false time, nor want voice, for he has such a way of helping, that errors cannot be detected, while his performance appears your own, for which you get all the credit. The same again in conversation; your remarks become brilliant, witty, appropriate, epigrammatic, in spite of yourself. I don't know how it is, but every felicitous observation from him prompts two more at least in reply.

Now, mother mine, Mr. Trenk is a very useful, pleasant acquaintance; for all ornamental purposes invaluable. But still you put thought upon your brow of wisdom, and caution me against going too far, against having my feelings enlisted, with a great deal more good, sage advice. But, mother, this is absurd, if I can say so with all deference to you. Is not Mr. Trenk a gay, dissipated young man, with a very bad moral character, a gambler, and very extravagant? Is he not proverbial for a keen sense of making money? Too calculating to think of a poor girl like me, without coupons or color. Let him throw down his glove in the parlor centre crowded with our greatest beauties or fortunes, and they would all rush to pick it up, even though their foreheads should come to a shock like gallant knights in the lists of a tournament.

But what am I to do, mother mine, when he is so agreeable? Am I to frown or be dignified and distant? I am



grateful for his attentions. I am, moreover, pleased and proud of them. If Mrs. Slapdash said we were a pair of turtle doves, surely it is better to be discussed as male and female mated in ornithology than be hung as a single espalier on the wall. I am not inclined to cultivate this branch in the science of horticulture yet awhile. People now-a-days, who preserve a dignified reserve, are generally stupid. Mother, you have heard of that numerous and ancient race, the De Trops. I do not envy their society, and will avoid being one of the family. But, mother, can you oblige me by looking among your work on the stand for the scissors, and I will try to please you in this pattern of my collar, if I cannot be a pattern in my conduct. Thank you, I am always losing them; and now shall I send word to Mr. Trenk not to call again, as he is dangerous?

With such suggestions would Claudia have answered her parent had the subject been canvassed between them. But the mother had far too much confidence in her daughter's prudence to suppose she needed any caution or advice as to her line of conduct with Mr. Trenk. The sagest of women have often made a similar mistake in trusting their children in such matters. Claudia felt confident she was fancy free, nor was she afraid of her affections becoming engaged to Mr. Trenk. Indeed she never had thought upon the subject at all.

But still certain little attentions bestowed upon her by Nathan would not have been permitted by others. Sometimes her hand remained in his for a moment when the waltz was ended, or a slight pressure weighed upon her shoulder in adjusting a shawl to her neck, or his arm would be near if not actually encircling her waist when conducting her to the piano. Now these trifling incidents were nothing, meant



nothing, amounted to nothing, but yet they were not unpleasant.

She thought of him when practising certain pieces of music; and other airs were associated in tender memories with Nathan. No love was mixed up in these pensive musings. She was not thinking of love. Had the thought of it flashed upon her mind in reveries of him, her delicate sensibility would have shrunk startled, frightened at the discovery. To entertain that feeling would militate against her plans; it would clog her ambition, and, if known or suspected by others, her prestige would vanish—that is, if she had any prestige at all.

Nathan was not a puppy, and yet believed she gave him an enviable preference—that she had a decided predilection for him. But he had no thought of bringing household cares as a damper upon his youthful pleasures in all their fascinating variety and success. Such an establishment would not promote his professional ambition. It would absorb too much of his valuable time, interfere with his habits of ease and comfort, to double his expenses. He did not aspire to the honorable position of head of a large and increasing family. Even now to be bouquet-holder for a few moments to a pretty belle was irksome, when he wished himself the busy-bee, ever on the wing, sipping sweets from every fragrant petal in a metropolitan conservatory of beauties.

Grateful to the unfortunate lady for her kind feelings, he amply repaid her by his attentions in return. His happiest hours were spent with her in social intercourse, often alone in conversation, when both exerted themselves to please, when both were brilliant, or in practising those accomplishments in which they excelled. His present visit was, by appointment, to discuss in advance of others a contemplated



fancy ball quietly spoken of but not divulged to the world. The rich Madame Raquetaque was the impressaria of this mighty undertaking. But she was afraid of a failure unless assured of the preliminary support of Claudia and Mr. Trenk. With such lieutenants she hoped to bring out the full strength of a fashionable excitement.

Many questions were to be settled before fixing the programme for Madam Raquetaque. The music to be selected, the figures to be danced, the costumes to be worn, required mature deliberation. It was to discuss these points Nathan had now called on Claudia. When she made her appearance, therefore, in the parlor, her pleasure at his presence was perceptible, well knowing the object of his visit. In deciding upon costumes they readily agreed to recommend the time to be fixed in the reign and at the court of Louis XVI. of France. That era would allow greater latitude in the selection of characters and dress; in the rich embroidery, with laces, satins, velvets, of antiquated courtiers, and the more plain apparel of the philosophers or levellers who were effecting innovations tending to our present fashions.

Their conversation turned to the subject of music suitable for the antiquated figures to be introduced in the dancing at the fancy ball. In their interchange of opinions, after much had been said, Nathan remarked: "The music most popular in the last century is easily to be found if it be not known to our musicians; many old pieces have been always welcome to the public. They are emanations of healthy genius, natural, simple, and soon understood. They appeal alike to all hearts, to be received everywhere with equal favor. But when music does not possess this charm, the very soul of melody, it ceases to impart pleasure. And yet, much is tole-



rated because it has been composed by some celebrated artist, or patronized by some one of influence without taste or cultivation. Do not imagine this impossible or even strange among refined circles. For every art or science has its enthusiasts, its fanatics, its insane votaries. These cause much mischief before their madness is discovered. Their minds are warped with some monomania, and they distort their favorite pursuit to their especial malady. Thus they fill the arts with objectionable works. They sometimes produce music in which noise and confusion create a chaos of sounds destructive to harmony, to melody, to common sense; fit only for an audience in Pandemonium, which might be called the infernal. In painting, they people their canvas with repulsive figures and revel in horrors. Forgetting that the end of art is to give pleasure, they strive, with much time, labor, and genius, to disgust. But pardon me," added Nathan, changing his tone of voice. "It was not my intention to extemporize a treatise on the Fine Arts in the presence of one from whom I could more properly and most gratefully receive instruction. But you know our thoughts take erratic flights, even when they should array themselves in some pensive order."

"Take me along with you always in such pleasant excursions, even if they be erratic. Your humble companion will promise to confess her happiness in an appreciating expressive silence," exclaimed Claudia, with unusual animation. "But do you wish your thoughts to don the pensive mantle in pursuit of melancholy? Surely, it would be passing strange to find you sad, save only when in search of a novel sensation."

"And why not, may I ask?" answered Nathan, taking her gloved hand as he was seated at her side. "Would you condemn your captives to perpetual gaiety? In mercy spare



them; spare them in pity from such a doom. Display the common feminine benevolence which never allows a mortal to be supremely blessed."

"Well, if you wish to be made miserable, it is the only favor I cannot grant," she remarked, as a thrill of delight flashed through her nerves.

"No one desires that, fair lady. But we wander from the point. To be pensive, even sad, is not the existence of the wretched. Tears are not always indicative of suffering. At this moment, in no light mood of mind, I would not barter my feelings for the world's applause."

"That world you speak of would be surprised to hear such sentiments from one of its favorites."

And as Claudia gave utterance to the words, she felt his breath upon her neck and cheek, while his arm lightly encircled her, and a greater pressure from his hand fell upon her glove. She did not desire to meet his gaze, nor even to move lest the dreamy illusion entrancing her sense of propriety would pass away to dissipate the sweet spell upon her.

"The world you speak of is not in reality my world," he said, in a low, clear tone. "An indefinable realm lies beyond the commonplace confines of life, where thoughts, memories, and even people whom you have loved and lost are your subjects, who come at your bidding to make you truly happy. Whatever was bright, was pleasing, was beautiful in the past, is buried in the past; but its spirit, its ideal visits you to awaken the former sensations, purified into a delicious rapture. What other enjoyments are comparable with these, the aroma of them all, the imperishable reminiscence remaining when fragrance, beauty, and splendor of the flowers of precious moments bestowed upon us have been buried long ago. In this dream-land of memories you now find me recalling



what has been, and perhaps noting this present hour as another treasure to be added to my rich possessions. I was thinking, sweet Claudia, of former scenes with you, remembered and imperishable as the emotions now all absorbing and delightful."

"But you mention those whom you have loved and lost coming back in remembrance to give you happiness. I was not aware you had bestowed your affections upon any one, especially upon any one now no more. Grief for the dead, however, claims its sacrifice, and even thus your brightest, happiest moments must have their clouds of sorrow." In the earnest expression of her thoughts she looked up in the beaming countenance of Mr. Trenk, to read in his eyes the glow of ardor and generous sympathy under which he thus, for the first time, breathed his confidence to her.

"I have loved many who are gone; perhaps innocent of all knowledge of my affection for them," he replied. "They were brilliant stars, illuming the horizon for a moment, to vanish, leaving a dazzling image of surpassing loveliness or of feminine excellence in my keeping. I may not have cherished a selfish aspiration for their possession, yet, in the religion of the soul, I am still their silent worshipper."

"Sorrow for their loss should make you unhappy," murmured Claudia, almost unconscious that she had spoken.

"Why should sorrow be a cause of unhappiness—for sorrow is a pleasurable emotion?"

Claudia looked up once more in amazement to see if she rightly comprehended the question.

"You seem to doubt, fair lady, the truth of such precepts."

"I should wish those whom I loved to shed tears over my grave," she answered, innocently, in the fulness of her heart.

"Your wish most certainly will be fulfilled. Yet I pray



you do not condemn my philosophy as Pagan and pernicious. You will live for ever in my memory, a constant thought of the pleasant past ; and if my emotions express themselves in grief, in regret, or sorrow, even in tears, still they will not be painful ; for we are so constituted that whatever is painful in remembrance is soon forgotten or banished ; and you, dear Claudia, will never, I trust, be consigned to that oblivion."

No reply was given to this assurance. In her present happiness she took no heed of the past or future. Never was her existence half so joyous as at this moment ; and yet she felt a tinge of pensive, quiet sadness. The silence remained unbroken, nor did either desire to break it. After some time she resumed the conversation in a different tone on another topic, as the fascination of the moment had faded away, to leave her composed in her mind to recall the previous portion of his observations before his thoughts and words had taken their intensely personal and no less interesting deflection. Ignoring all this scene, in which her feelings had overcome her reason, she said : " I think we must differ as to the uses of the Fine Arts. Something more than the pleasing can be found in them. Perhaps not in music ; but painting has other purposes. Were you thinking of the fatal picture, as it is called, now before us, when you extended your criticism to the arts in general ?"

"The sight of the picture," Nathan answered, "I will confess, suggested the misapplication of genius ; for I cannot believe," he added, "the scene in the forest was sketched for any purpose except to exhibit the surpassing skill and depraved taste of the artist."

"In that, sir, you are mistaken. Painting is the sister art to history and biography, as music is to poetry. The painter



may have a higher aim than to afford pleasure only. He commemorates actions and scenes of life. He grasps the pencil and brush instead of the pen ; he becomes famous in portraying truth instead of the beautiful."

"But what motive then could have influenced the artist," asked Nathan, "to depict one of your ancestors with such repulsive features?"

"The truth," Claudia replied. "To illustrate a family legend not known, or at least not understood out of our home circle. A tradition prevails among us that we are subject to strange vicissitudes of fortune, each crisis being marked by some scene in which the strongest passions that can convulse the human frame are exhibited. Of these you have an example in the picture. But the outbursts of these bad feelings are not fatal to us. On the contrary, they mark the commencement of renewed influence, success, renown. They, however, also foretell the destruction of happiness, peace of mind, of comfort to the fated individual. Worldly prosperity and mental misery are the lot of each one who has once had these passions called forth."

"Was such the case with this Colonial colonel?" asked Nathan.

"His history was not unlike that of his ancestors. The tale as told is, that he was successful in the encounter with the savage enemy, or with the supposed savage ; for if you observe his features you will perceive his countenance is Saxon. He was of white blood, and furthermore a half-brother of the old colonel. He was carried off by the Indians while a boy and adopted in the tribe. He was intimately known to the colonel when they were both boys."

"It was a fortunate discovery that he recognised his relation in the war-paint," Nathan remarked.



“On the contrary, the savage, as he advanced to inflict the mortal blow, was seized with some superstitious terror and paused. Perhaps he had a faint recollection of boyhood in the features of the wounded officer. However, while he hesitated, the colonel drew a second pistol and fired with a fatal aim. The savage fell dead at his feet. My grandfather was rescued by the soldiers to recover from his wounds.”

“It was then the savage who made the discovery?”

“Such is the supposition,” said Claudia. “But the colonel was still in ignorance of having slain his brother, whom he had loved when they were young. Soon after it became known that the savage half-brother was dead, when the colonel succeeded to the estates in entail as the next heir male. He was now in affluence, and the report of his slaying a renowned Indian warrior in single combat made him famous. He was at the zenith of prosperity and felicity.”

“But did he not dread the fate foretold and transmitted in the family tradition?”

“He did not know he was one of the fated. He was not aware the repulsive passions had thrown their shadows over his countenance. They had been observed only by the savage, and he was dead. Subsequently he was appointed a commissioner to form a treaty with some tribes, and once more ventured into the wilderness to meet them. While in council with the braves, he was apprised by an aged chief of certain facts, from which the colonel could not doubt by whose hands the half-brother fell. The information shocked the finer feelings of his nature; his soul was convulsed with horror; his features betrayed for the second time the frightful passions at work within; the savages were awe-struck at the spectacle, and the council broke up in confusion.”

“Is that all of his history?”



"You are aware of his rank in the army of the Revolution," Claudia replied. "But his peace of mind was gone after the interview at the Indian council. His wealth and influence continued through life, till he died full of years and honors."

"With such a legend," said Nathan, "the picture becomes invested with additional interest. It is no wonder you hold it in high estimation above its intrinsic value as a work of art."

"You will now admit, sir, that painting has other objects beyond portraying the beautiful?"

"The pleasure, I suppose, is to be found in the legend if not in the picture."

"The tradition is interesting to me," answered Claudia, "but I do not know how it could be attractive to others."

"All romance is fascinating."

"Romance, Mr. Trenk! Then you do not believe the story?"

"It was not taught me when I was learning the longer and shorter catechism, and I am now too old to have my faith enlarged."

"It is an innocent belief," said Claudia, "and I cherish the legend—now no more to be renewed, for I am the last of the family."

"And you are not a fit subject for fighting Indians in single combat," added Nathan, smiling, as he bade good evening and took his leave.

On his way homeward Nathan remembered he had promised Mr. Tantis an interview for the following day, which he now resolved with some reluctance to keep with that unfortunate individual.



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

MR. TANTIS was fast verging to insolvency. His affairs at this time were desperate. Every effort to retrieve his fortune had eventuated in failure. His petty creditors were importunate. His wants were many and his friends few in number. He had prevailed on Nathan to give him a hearing, as he wished to explain some schemes from which Tantis hoped for splendid results.

Nathan had consented to give him an audience, partly influenced by commiseration for the poor fellow's hard fate, and partly from considerations for Emma Gray, who was dependent upon her uncle. The character of Tantis, however, was too well known to Nathan to promise much good from an interview. Yet Trenk intended to assist him if possible, and at all events to encourage his efforts to improve his circumstances. Contemptible as Tantis had become from his petty tricks and deceptions, as well as from his arts of cringing and sycophancy, yet he was not wholly to be despised. He was voluble and amusing, and at times possessed valuable information.

The hopeful scheme that he now proposed to Nathan when they met in the morning by appointment, was to sell to Sabina a native Bushman, captured at the Cape of Good Hope. To effect this negotiation, Tantis desired the aid and influence of Nathan. This new object of commercial speculation Tantis had received as a present from a friend, who was tired of the brute. Half human, half monkey, the Bushman was about three feet in stature, articulating some words distinctly, while its other vocal sounds were the gibber of an animal, or the imperfect gutturals of an inorganic language.



This caricature on humanity was dressed in a fashionable suit of black broadcloth. But while it was kept in good behavior by fear of the lash, still it could not be checked in its natural instinct to crawl on its hands and feet, and in that posture to run under or over chairs and tables with all the agility of an ape. It was hoped Sabina would be attracted by the new vocabulary of sounds to which it could give utterance. Nathan readily undertook to introduce Tantis to Sabina, and promised him all the aid in his power in effecting a sale of the precious article. But he could not hope for a favorable result. He was afraid Sabina had already learned its language, a Bushman, in all probability, not being a novelty with one who had pushed his inquiries over every continent. He therefore gave Tantis a letter, who went on his way rejoicing.

But the interview was not a success. Sabina knew all about a Bushman, imitating every sound it could utter, and even teaching the man-animal to articulate new words unknown to it before. But Tantis once having gained an audience of Sabina, resolved to profit by the opportunity and to tempt him with new projects. He therefore drew from his pocket an old deed on parchment, which purported to be a lease from Sabina's maternal grandfather to Lionel Gray, and inquired if it were of any value to him. He hastily scanned the contents and returned it to Mr. Tantis with the remark that it was of no service, as he held a release that was of record.

Mr. Tantis, on his return, exhibited the document to Nathan, requesting him to keep it, and if it were of any worth they would make some further use of it on their joint account. In the meantime, he hoped Mr. Trenk would favor him with a small loan for a few days, as he was short in



funds. Nathan readily complied with his request, and the unsuccessful speculator in the monkey traffic departed, not without some consolation and money in his pocket to cover his immediate wants.

Hopeful in his disposition, he could not, however, fail to reflect that the loan from Nathan must soon be exhausted. After various efforts in Wall street to accomplish some other profitable negotiations, he achieved nothing. Late in the evening, therefore, he gave up further attempts in despair, and turned his steps up town, slowly walking along Broadway with many desponding, gloomy reflections. The lamps were lighted before he reached Union Square, and the lowering clouds indicated a damp, rainy night. At a corner, Charles Nevil stood as though waiting for some one, and Tantis made a feint of touching his hat, doubtful if his salutation would be recognised by that wealthy gentleman.

Mr. Nevil, however, not only returned the bow but addressed Tantis with some friendly greeting, detaining him as if desirous of further conversation. Tantis, only too happy to be thus received, was right willing to stop to await Mr. Nevil's pleasure. Surprised and gratified, he could not divine the cause of this unexpected honor from such a distinguished source. Certain, however, that Nevil had some motive for thus acting, he was content to bide his time for a solution of the enigma, and if possible to profit by it.

Nevil had been apprised that two of Sabina's spies and accomplices were, for several hours, following stealthily the footsteps of Tantis. They were not, at this time, far behind watching his movements, apparently with some evil designs. Presently they passed on the opposite side of the street. Soon after, two other persons followed in turn, watching the movements of Sabina's men.



It was thus apparent to Nevil that the guard which he had set upon Sabina were performing their duty faithfully. The cause, however, of Sabina's conduct to one so contemptible as Tantis was inexplicable, for he had nothing to excite cupidity or any other passion. Why, then, should Sabina have marked him as a victim? This was worthy of further inquiry, and for that object had Nevil detained him. Indeed, he felt kindly to the unfortunate man from the fact that Sabina had some hostile intentions.

Inviting Tantis to join him in a little dinner then preparing in a fashionable restaurant in the immediate vicinity, they were soon ushered into a private room where the table seemed already prepared for their reception. The apartment was brilliantly lighted, adorned with rich furniture and a costly service of plate. Tantis could scarce realize his lines had fallen in such pleasant places. It was many months since he had ventured into luxurious retreats, and, above all, been blessed with choice company.

Charles Nevil knew the art of dining to perfection, and, moreover, was equally skilled in pleasing his guests. He was therefore not long in gaining the confidence of his companion, who was only too willing to serve the distinguished individual thus honoring him with an invitation. Nevil plied him generously with the choicest wines until Tantis lost all reserve and caution in his conversation.

He talked, and his remarks were listened to with the most profound respect. He boasted of success in speculations, the arts practised, and the tricks, prevarications, petty falsehoods, mean devices, and shameless artifices, by which he had circumvented others. Still Nevil listened approvingly until Tantis, through his tongue, was turned inside out, revealing the contemptible inner man in all his insignificance



and shame. He seemed, from his own account, destitute of all good traits of character. Nevil could find nothing redeeming about him.

He drew his attention to Sabina, and Tantis related all that had occurred in the interview of the morning, all that he remembered or deemed important. But he omitted to mention the old lease, as that seemed of no importance. Again Nevil questioned him as to Sabina. But nothing was elicited which furnished a clue to this watch upon his footsteps. Nevil was aware something more remained to be told, but he felt confident Tantis was not suppressing the information intentionally. Could Sabina have any designs on Emma Gray?

Nevil led him on to speak of the pretty orphan girl. On this point, however, Tantis was less inclined to converse. He answered the gentleman's questions with hesitation, and became cautious and reserved. It was soon apparent he was ashamed of his weakness in the presence of a shrewd man of business—of his weakness in affording a home to a penniless girl from whom no profit could be derived. He imagined Nevil would hold him in contempt. No man of sense or business tact would perpetrate such madness as to take home a poor girl, without a dollar, to hang as a dead weight upon his hands.

But Nevil at last caught the drift of his thoughts, as he urged him with questions and suggestions, till Tantis, ashamed and abashed, reluctantly told her little history from childhood, and confessed that in a thoughtless moment he had taken her home. It was the only good action he related to Nevil; yet it was the only action he blushed at when acknowledged. He inwardly cursed his fate, which compelled him to divulge his folly, and thus lose his last hope of



making an impression on Nevil as to his shrewd business habits.

"Then you took the infant home because she had no other friend to provide for her?"

"It was so, and I cannot help it."

"You gained nothing by the operation, Mr. Tantis?"

"I can't say I have," was the hesitating answer.

"What do you hope to have as a recompense for the deed of kindness?"

"Nothing, Mr. Nevil, for the greatest weakness of my life," replied Tantis, as he kept his eyes upon the plate, playing with his fork.

But he would have been much encouraged had he looked up and perceived the beaming smile of satisfaction on Nevil's manly countenance, and the moistening of his eye, almost to glisten with a forming tear of pity for the helpless orphan. He felt an interest awakened for the man who had befriended the destitute child, and he mentally resolved to aid him.

"It was generous, however, in you," said Nevil.

"But generosity don't pay."

"It affords its own recompense sometimes."

"But in this instance, Mr. Nevil, it is a dead loss to me."

"Perhaps you will hereafter be rewarded. But at present, to talk on more important matters, I think you can employ your time now more profitably in watching the stock market."

"I agree with you," Tantis replied, hastily, "if I only had funds wherewith to operate."

"There will be no want of them when the opportunity offers for investment. If you are inclined to turn your atten-



tion in that quarter, call on Mr. Martin at eleven to-morrow, and we will then talk further on the subject."

Tantis was elated at this prospect of good fortune, and as the dinner was now over, he hastened up street on his way home, with visions of untold millions floating through his fertile imagination. The spies, however, of Sabina were again on his track, and while dreaming of a long career of financial success, there was some danger the speculator would be food for the fishes in the river before morning. He had now quitted Broadway, and turned down an intersecting street in which was his dwelling. The lamps shone brightly, but the pavements were deserted, without any one in sight.

A man passed along on the opposite side at a rapid walk, and was soon lost in the dark in front. When out of observation of Tantis he crossed the street, as he slowly returned to meet him. Approaching, he politely requested to know the time of night. But Tantis, preoccupied with his pleasant fancy speculations in the future, hastily replied he had no watch in his pocket. Hereupon the stranger wished to ascertain the distance to the Fourth Avenue, and stopping in front, prevented his walking forward. Tantis, thus compelled to pause, advised the man to inquire of the police. But the stranger, observing his accomplice, who had followed Tantis, approaching from behind, detained him with further inquiries.

As the second man drew near, two persons from the opposite pavement crossed the street and leaned in silence against an area iron-railing to witness the meeting. But being espied by the one in conversation with Tantis, the future millionaire was no further molested, being permitted to pass without longer detention. Thus released, he walked on again, not suspecting the danger he had escaped, until the two last



comers overtaking him, requested him to "hold up for a moment."

Vexed at this second interruption, Tantis would have disregarded their wishes had not one of them remarked, as he came close to him :

"I am afraid, Mr. Tantis, you do not know them men that you were talking to back there just now."

"Well, what of that, sir?"

"Nothing to me ; but if you don't want a rap over the head and a sticking-plaster over your mouth to keep you quiet, you had better give them a wide berth."

"Thank you, my friend," said Tantis. "But who are you?"

"Only a shadow watching them fellows all this night. They have spotted you for somethen or nuther, and if you don't keep your eye skinned you will be a goner."

"But I am now near home ; there can be no further trouble to-night."

"Don't be too sure of that. If you move on we will see you safe, for them fellows will circumvent you if they can."

Thus admonished, he walked forward with the shadows as an escort till he arrived at his front door. Thanking them for their assistance, he hastily entered his home, right glad he had escaped by unexpected aid from an unforeseen danger.

It would have been an unprofitable undertaking in the spies of Sabina had they effected the capture and robbery of Tantis. The deed for which they were in search was not in his possession. Already had Nathan Trenk examined the lease and retained the parchment, while Tantis, ignorant of its contents and value, was almost made a victim in the mistake.

The lease from Sabina's ancestor was for a term of ninety-nine years, at a nominal rent, for a tract of vacant land on the island, but now far within the city, covered with streets,



squares, and expensive buildings. It had been uninclosed ground at the death of Mr. Gray, as the writing was executed only the year previous to that event. The right of Emma's father to the property being unknown, new deeds had been made by Sabina's relations for portions sold as building lots, while much still remained undisposed of by them.

When Nathan mastered the contents of the writing, and examined the city map to ascertain the boundaries of the land embraced in it, he thought what a princely fortune would fall to Emma were it not for the release mentioned by Sabina. He therefore put away the parchment carefully in his iron safe, resolved to thoroughly investigate the title when Tantis should again call to consult him about it. But as Tantis already believed the lease was without value, it is evident there would be no further discussion in relation to it. Nathan would not recur to the subject in the absence of Tantis, and thus the orphan's interest was sacrificed. The natural inference with Nathan was, from Tantis giving up the search, that he had discovered the release spoken of, which would nullify the interest of Mr. Gray in the property.

In truth, Tantis, soon after the day he dined with Mr. Nevil, becoming absorbed in stock speculations, was said to be on the high road to fortune. He was now in funds; he was out of debt. He was lucky in every venture in the stock market; he had abandoned every speculation except buying and selling securities on time. His thoughts and conversation were all upon the rise and fall of shares in the public enterprises of the country. When he met Nathan he spoke only of the daily quotations at the board of brokers.

He had not exhibited the deed for Emma's benefit, but to sell it for his own profit. Her interest had never given him



a moment's reflection. It was to raise money for his own purposes which induced him to offer the writing for sale to Sabina. But now, being free from pecuniary pressure, he had forgotten its existence; and when he met Sabina he passed him hastily as a gentleman of no further use to him. He smiled as he recalled his first interview, and the importance which he had then attached to it. On the contrary, Sabina now wished to detain him when they met, to hold some conversation. But Tantis, always engaged, in great haste tore himself away without much ceremony. Thus Sabina was foiled in his efforts to revive any negotiation about the ancient lease.

Emma was the connecting link between her selfish uncle and good society. He was consequently proud of his niece, who thus added importance to his family connexion. Nor was he penurious in his style of living when he had means to gratify his habits of extravagance; and being attached to her, she profited much by his recent change of fortune. He encouraged the accepting invitations, and right willingly placed whatever funds were needed at her disposal for her proper appearance on all occasions.

When fashionable and much noted entertainments were spoken of down-town among his friends, he was always well informed. When asked if he had been one of the invited, he would reply he never went to such "gatherings," but left them to his niece, who had of course gone, as she was fond of them.

The impression soon prevailed he was on intimate terms with all the patrician families, but that, from his habits and tastes, he disliked parties, consigning to Emma the task of doing the honors and hospitalities for his household. Delighting in amusements, he was most happy in escorting her to the



public exhibitions, the theatres, concerts, oratorios, and operas. His attention to her was of a most parental character, and apparently to her friends it seemed as if he were a most affectionate, kind, and considerate uncle. They were pleased to see the poor orphan had such a generous relative. Nevil's mother spoke of it with much satisfaction. Nevil himself observed it with pleasure, and consequently to the uncle's profit. For Nevil, perceiving his generosity to Tantis had benefited Emma, was inclined to continue his aid and counsels, which had raised him from want to independence. But little did Tantis know his kindness to Emma had been the sole cause of his present prosperity.

When it was rumored that Madam Raquetaque was about astonishing the gay world with a fancy ball, he laid his commands upon his niece to prepare for that event, and satisfied her shrinking scruples that his purse was ample to meet any demands which her wants for that object would require. He aspired, moreover, to some refined tastes on his own part, and was a constant attendant at the opera. No doubt in a short time he would have been a noted amateur, with equal merit with many others with similar ambition. But unfortunately on one occasion, late in the afternoon, he declined entertaining a business proposition at that hour, as he was engaged to go home and escort some ladies in the evening to hear the magnificent opera of Napoleon in Egypt.

This was an unfortunate mistake in a name, as it indicated his profound ignorance, which turned the laugh against him whenever mentioned, even with those who never read a libretto. But Tantis did not discover his blunder until all the brokers in Wall street had heard of it; their circulation of the story effectually ruined any further hopes of his gaining reputation as a lyric connoisseur.



Always scheming for notoriety, he next essayed to attract the attention of the old Lady Dowager. It would have been a proud day for him to have seen her carriage and servants in livery stopping at his door, while she was within the house on a visit to his niece. But he could not prevail upon Emma to throw herself in the way of the ancient lady, or to intrude upon her notice when they met in society. The poor girl knew she was an object of dislike, so that her natural delicacy of feeling revolted at the thought of forcing a recognition. But her uncle was incapable of appreciating such sentiments in his niece, who, he declared, was throwing away every chance of reconciliation with her rich and distinguished relative.

---

#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

It had been observed the old Lady Dowager was seen this season more frequently in public than usual for many years. Not only at the great entertainment of Mrs. Slapdash, but at the evening reunions of other friends, was she constantly to be found. She seemed to have obtained a new lease of life and its enjoyments. Animated in her conversation, attentive to those whom she recognised, her cheerfulness and amiable deportment threw a charm around which rendered her popular with young and old.

The glare of light in the brilliantly illumined parlors, however, somewhat impaired her vision, which rendered it difficult at times for her to distinguish, in crowded rooms, those with whom she was most intimate. But her sense of hearing was perfect as ever, and every well-known voice always came



welcome to her ears. No matter on what key a conversation was pitched, even at a whisper, she seemed capable of catching all the intonations and inflections of sound. When not engaged with friends she was attentive to the conversation of others near to her, or listening to the music which came from harp or piano, or the human voice.

The reaction in her feelings when she returned to her solitary home, amid all its grandeur, was not so well known to the public. But there when alone, in communion with her own thoughts and thick-crowding memories of the past, her fits of despondency became more frequent, of a deeper gloom. Her former agony of soul, with the pangs of despised love, came back to haunt her. Fifty years rolling over the events of her girlhood, had not yet buried them in the grave of forgetfulness. The last half century was a blank in her memory—a narrow gulf, beyond which her mental view ranged to the shores and scenes of her virgin life, now recalled with all their vivid distinctness and freshness. She forgot nothing of that distant period of time, nor did the remote incidents fail to revive once more the passionate anguish with which they were engraven on her heart.

Now she recalled sailing on a summer's eve on his light schooner, when he talked to her of the distant climes he had visited and the happiness they would have when revisited again with her as his bride. Now her memory dwelt upon a morning in spring beneath the cherry trees in bloom, when they wandered through the verdant lanes on Brooklyn Heights—when he talked of love and the bright future before them. Now she remembered the smell of the wild flowers and lilac blossoms of that vernal morning. She recollected the old trees and roads with which their path was marked. Once more she could see the day when on horseback they rode



beyond Pavonia to fly their hawks at game in the marshes. She imagined her pet bird was still perched on her wrist—the bird she had tamed and trained, made gentle by days and nights of incessant care. How spirited her white palfrey on that day; how gallant he rode on his powerful horse. She could still hear his ringing voice, she could still see his smiling, beautiful countenance, she could still feel his tall, manly presence at her side.

What joy and rapture came over her when she thought once more of these happy days. But her aged frame was too weak for such excitement to last. Her nerves would fail, and then, drooping with the reaction, gloomy reminiscences of his shameful perfidy and desertion filled her mind with horrors, until she groaned aloud in sorrow and despair. Frenzy would agitate her frame—she would rush through her many stately, silent apartments, unconscious of her actions, to sink to the floor from sheer bodily exhaustion, with mental prostration. Her attendants would hasten to her aid to minister alleviating stimulants, till she was once more calm and restored.

Seated in her ample cushioned chair, with her head resting on her emaciated hand, she would mutter aloud unintelligible, incoherent phrases, indicative of mental aberration. But she was not mad. She knew her own thoughts, and well did she comprehend the thoughts of her faithful domestics around her.

“They believe my mind is gone,” muttered she, in soliloquy. “They believe I speak aloud all that crosses this heated brain. They catch words here and there, and suppose I utter every sentence formed. But they hear only a word on each page of the daily chapter coined in this too busy intellect. They catch stray leaves from my book of life, and imagine them the whole volume of my memory. Would that I were mad—



that I could remember only the bright days of the past, the sweet fancies with which they were blessed. Would that I could forget my wrongs, be relieved from their pain. Would that I could shut out my remorse for withholding aid when the world crushed him. I could have saved him, and now my misery would be less. But I thought of that weak creature, that doll, whom he had taken to his arms as his wife; it was she I hated—with a deadly hate. She had usurped my place, and I would not help him in his second wrong to me.

“I dreamed that he turned his large, blue eyes, with their long, heavy lashes, upon me imploringly, and wept. I dreamed he prayed to me to help him from ruin, from dishonor, from the grave; yet I refused him in my love because I hated her, still to hate her offspring. This was madness, insanity, the rash resolve of an idiot. Remorse has now come upon me to punish me with its scorpion stings for this. He could still have loved me had I befriended him. I might have been his benefactor. But he died—died without telling me wherefore he had been so cruel. Would that I could see him once more to beg forgiveness. All my fortune would be his, and he should be happy.

“Yes, I shall see him again; his image is always before me; I have heard his sweet ringing voice. It is for this I visit scenes of dissipation and pleasure. In the confused noise and babble of many talking I have heard his tongue many times. Once I heard it even here, in this home of mine. He will yet come to bless my sight. Why do sounds of him hover through the air, to come near me in crowds when I hear him more distinctly? If my eyes were not failing I might see him. Was ever human being formed with such melody of tones. Was ever one who could imitate his sweet notes? Yet I



have heard them often of late, and I shall hear them again. It is no illusion of the senses, for all other sounds are natural and understood properly by me."

With this explanation it is easy to comprehend the feelings and motives which drew the Lady Dowager into company. A monomania had seized upon her. Believing she was destined to see her Lionel, it is possible she mistook some phase of the buzz of conversation in crowded rooms for familiar sounds remembered from times long past away. She might, indeed, hear a voice that resembled his. But it was an infatuation to suppose he could rise from his grave in youth, beauty, and health, to bless her aged eyes. This was her madness, not her detached phrases, which when combined were unmeaning. But it gave her life, and hope, and energy to pursue her career among fashionable people in public.

Whenever she remained at home for the evening, Morton Burk was released from attendance. She had declined an invitation to the fancy ball, although urgently solicited by Madam Raquetaque. Morton, therefore, made his arrangements for his costume and movements on that evening without being required to wait as usual for her convenience. He had selected a rich uniform to represent the Commander of the Swiss Guards, and arranged to accompany Nathan Trenk in his carriage.

But Nathan was delayed in some preparations in consequence of his dress not being finished by the tailors till the last moment. He was arrayed in the fashion of an American gentleman visiting the court of Louis XVI., a prevailing style at home for years, even within the present century. It was a blue velvet suit, with crimson vest, much lace on his bosom and wrists, with silver knee and shoe buckles. His hair was powdered, plastered with pomatum, and gathered behind in



a silk bag tied with a black ribbon. He wore a short sword or rapier fastened with a fancy leather belt and diamond clasp.

After the two gentlemen set out for the gay scene, Morton discovered some of his military trappings required inspection and alteration before entering for the campaign. They therefore drove to his home, where the tailor was still in attendance for any emergency. Requesting Nathan to walk into the parlors to wait for him, Morton ran up stairs to his dressing-room. Neither of the gentlemen was thinking of the Lady Dowager, who, it might be supposed, was in some inner secluded apartment. But she had wandered down to the most distant of the suite on the first floor, where she sat in a dim light ruminating on the sweet and bitter fancies of her fertile mind.

The communicating doors were partly open throughout the whole extent. Her attention, however, was too much absorbed in her own reflections to heed the noise of the gentlemen in the front hall. She sat with her head resting upon her hand, with her eyes fixed on the carpet. She was thinking of the fancy ball, while her memory went back to a brilliant entertainment of the Spanish Minister which she had attended with her Lionel as an escort. She could remember his gay and beautiful dress, his still more handsome face and figure. Quiet and calm this evening, she was more rational, to sigh once more at the thought of him so many years in his grave, when the sudden sound of the piano, and a voice singing

“Shepherds, tell me, have you seen  
My Flora pass this way?”

in the front parlor, caused her to look up.

Near the brilliant chandelier in the centre of the drawing-



room was her Lionel at last, such as he appeared to her on that happy evening. He had come indeed in youth and bloom, in the befitting apparel she loved so well. He was singing his favorite song. He moved, he looked in the mirror and adjusted his sword-belt. It was no illusion for her, and uttering a cry, she sprang forward with the bound of a girl, forgetful of her age and decrepitude.

But her frail limbs refusing aid to her buoyant spirit, she sank to the floor, her forehead striking the corner of a table in the way. The blood flowed profusely from the wound, while her faithful attendants rushing in, bore her off insensible in their arms. The communicating doors being immediately shut by the domestics so soon as they were apprised of the accident, neither Nathan nor Morton was aware of what had happened when seated once more in the carriage on their drive to quite a different scene.

Dancing had not yet commenced when the two gentlemen made their bows and compliments to the fashionable and fascinating Madame Raquetaque. The ladies had not yet critically examined the toilets of each other. They had not learned all the historical personages intended to be represented in the gay party. Slowly, however, moving among the groups assembled in the brilliant rooms, they were gradually comprehending the extensive variety of costumes, of tastes and fancies, which the impressaria had collected around her. Not much conversation was heard where all were intently engaged in scanning the rich and antique dresses, to withdraw their attention for an amusement less absorbing.

But the gentlemen had finished their preliminary observations on the company. Some few were standing around, freed from service on the ladies, waiting for the music to



summon them to the ball-room. Walter Parker, in the character of Mirabeau, had collected three or four near him to listen to his eloquence, for he was in a talking spirit to night, with a most cynical vein of ill-humor, which, with difficulty, he repressed. He had a vague presentiment of some unlucky incident to happen, making him nervously voluble, while he felt a depression at heart. He was too well trained and too much of a gentleman, however, to exhibit his unfortunate feelings in such a pleasant circle. But his asperity put a keen point upon his wit, and made up in sarcasm what it lost in real merit.

"She is beautiful, lovely, to-night," said Pactolus, alluding to a young widow who had attracted their attention.

"Angelic sweetness is in her countenance," added Harry Dace.

"Enough of the saccharine essence in her composition to sweeten a sugar plantation," remarked Morton Burk.

"But unfortunately it soured upon the temper of her husband," said Walter. "Had he been a Turk he would have shipped her on a sack-her-in voyage, and probably prolonged his own life."

"It was kind in him to die and leave her rich and free," Pactolus replied.

"Behold yon pretty creature, the blonde in bridal costume! She walks in beauty like the night robed in clouds of millinery, a zone of diamonds, and with a diadem of snowy pearls. She breathes of Ormus and of Ind. Who is this bright star of eve, rising resplendent on the brilliant horizon?" exclaimed Dace, enraptured with the vision.

"That young woman," answered Pactolus, "was the late Miss Charlotte de Russe."



"They say," added Burk, "that since her marriage she lisps no more."

"Very probable, because she has a new set of words."

"Or a new set of teeth," Walter surmised.

"Are they set to music?"

"Rich she must be," Mr. Dace remarked, "from the gems so rare on exhibition."

"Her father came down handsomely at the *dejeuné*," Pactolus said. "The new-made husband found under his plate a check for a hundred thousand."

"Certified, no doubt," Mr. Burk supposed, "by the praying teller of the Tenth and Broadway conjugal institution."

"But, Mr. Pactolus, you had better take her sister," Dace suggested. "She is just forty."

"I would not have her if she were just fifty," was the indignant answer.

"Bearing in mind the check under the plate, what do you say, Mr. Parker?"

"I thank you, Dace, for your generosity with other people's goods to me endow. But check-mates are disagreeable."

"Not for gold or plated ware would he leave his mountain home," hummed Morton, in *basso profundo*, to a popular song, with a slight variation in the stanza.

"Gentlemen, you are wanted for your places in the ball-room," cried Nathan, approaching.

"Under such a leader as Mr. Trenk I go forth to conquer," exclaimed Walter, moving away to seek his lady-partner.

"Gentlemen, you will please take your places in the ball-room," repeated Nathan, to various groups, as he walked slowly through the sumptuous suites of spacious saloons. He was the master of ceremonies, duly commissioned by Ma-



dame Raquetaque. He regulated every movement, was appealed to in every difficulty; he retrieved every unforeseen accident and mistake. How many ladies did he make happy by judicious aid in supplying partners. How admirably he arranged a wanting *vis-à-vis*. The leader of the music had frequently to ask his counsels when the programme was changed in consequence of unforeseen obstacles.

Mr. Trenk was the most popular gentleman present in that brilliant assembly. The name of Mr. Trenk was on every tongue; his praises were sung by all in one grand chorus; his opinions were the law unto that multitude; his words were words of wisdom, quoted with the reverence due to re-scripts of a sage.

But Nathan was withal quiet and unobtrusive. He was always to be found at the right place, and then moved away attentive to all alike, thus contributing to the general pleasure by his judicious arrangements and timely suggestions. He knew a fancy ball must be a succession of fascinating novelties to be a success, and novelties are dangerous experiments in such places. But he believed he could master the difficulties as they arose, hence his constant care to carry out the daring design sketched in the enterprising diversities for the evening's entertainment. His reward was found in the sweet smiles, the loud encomiums universally bestowed upon his skilful exertions. He felt happy, for in his kindness of heart in contributing to the pleasure of his friends, an ample recompense was in store for himself.

Two or three times in the crowded ball-room he endeavored to catch the eye of Mr. Chester, the rejected gentleman of the clubs. Nathan had recognised him as an old acquaintance seen in Mr. Parker's office before his college days. Since then Mr. Chester had been in the East as a consul, but when



his name was proposed at the club of "Babes," Nathan was not aware he was the same person. Now he wished to renew the acquaintance, but the hauteur of Chester's manners was repulsive, while it was evident he did not remember Nathan's features.

When waiting for a favorable opportunity to speak to him, Chester had been struck with the frequent mention of the name of Mr. Trenk. Everybody had something to say of Mr. Trenk; not to know him was deemed passing strange. Mr. Trenk, Mr. Trenk, thought Chester; surely he had once known some one of that name; the most accomplished gentleman in the city, highly skilled in music, dancing, in all modern languages; rich, handsome, and of a distinguished family. What distinguished family? Where did he come from, that he should not have known him as a boy?

While he was thus cogitating, his eye fell upon Walter Parker amusing a bevy of ladies with his sprightly remarks. Chester remembered his old habit of indulging in hyperbole when they were young lawyers together; he remembered his old uncle of the inner office; he remembered the office-boy who knew everything. What had become of that youngster from Randall's Island?—vicious of course, ruined with flattery, no doubt an outcast again, ending his career as he had commenced it in some charitable institution. Tunc was a queer sobriquet for the lad; Nunc Pro Tunc, because his first name was Nathan and his last name was what? Let me remember, for it was not Tunc. Nathan P. Tunc, that was not the name.

"Come, Mr. Chester," said the young lady, who was leaning on his arm, "Mr. Trenk says the next figure is called and the music has commenced."

"Mr. Trenk did you say, Miss Julia; pray tell me his first name?"



"Why Nathan, to be sure, sir. Everybody knows that."

"Nathan P. Trenk; that's it," muttered Chester; "the plebeian puppy, palming himself on society as patrician and wealthy."

"This way, this way, Miss Julia," cried Nathan, "I have reserved a choice place for you and your partner, whom I once had the pleasure to know," bowing at the same time to Chester.

But the China consul drew himself up with stately pride at the salutation, and stalked forward in silent, sullen, offended dignity, without a word in reply. Miss Julia found her partner very stupid; she was right glad when the music ceased, to be rejoiced when free from his company. He left her rather abruptly, and immediately sought Mr. Parker for an explanation.

"Do you know," said he, taking Walter's arm and walking apart with him, "do you know what has become of the poor boy whom you once had in your office called Tunc?"

Walter started at the inquiry, for it jarred harshly on his mind, as he replied:

"What of him, Mr. Chester?"

"He is now present at this ball, the same Nathan P. Trenk, the charity boy. Surely, you did not introduce him into society?"

Walter slowly withdrew his arm, and facing Chester, answered:

"Whatever I have done, I am not responsible to you, sir; and I hope you will never dare to address me in a similar tone with such language again."

"I meant no offence, Mr. Parker."

"That is enough; let me then give you a friendly caution."



Mr. Trenk will be happy to welcome you as one of his former friends when he needed them. At present he has obtained a distinguished position; he is an ornament to society, with many warm friends. I am one of them."

"But can you countenance his imposition?"

"What imposition, Mr. Chester?"

"Passing himself as patrician and wealthy."

"He has done neither. He is in manners, education, and feeling, too much of the gentleman for that."

"Education! Mr. Parker."

"Yes, sir; he has received a thorough education, which I know myself."

"Where did he receive it?"

"At one of the very best colleges in America."

"At whose expense, if he were poor?"

"His guardians paid for all. He never was destitute as you suppose."

Mr. Chester made no reply, but reflected for a moment, doubting the truth of every assertion there made. He had mixed too much with unprincipled men, with the worst portion of the Europeans in the East, to have a high sense of honor or appreciation of it in others. He therefore concluded, hastily, Walter was deceiving him with a well prepared, artful falsehood, and left him with that impression, determined to expose Trenk, little aware of the risk he would run in such an undertaking.

Walter Parker was deeply perplexed by this conversation. He could foresee much annoyance for Nathan, without any good to result from the remarks it would call forth. The exposure would be painful, therefore he pitied him. But such was his confidence in Trenk's manliness, in his inherent feelings as a gentleman, that he never doubted he would con-



duct himself properly throughout, to come off triumphant at last.

"What is the matter with Mr. Parker; is he composing a new oration for the benefit of his lady friends?" exclaimed Emma Gray, as Walter found himself at her side.

"Not an oration this time, Miss Emma; only finding appropriate words for some few thoughts."

"On what subject, sir?"

"Must I confess. I was composing some compliments for a lady?"

"Is she young and beautiful?"

"She is both, Miss Emma; and she is more than that."

"What more can she be?"

"The most beautifully dressed lady present."

"Then why not tell her so?"

"Somehow my compliments are failures; it would grieve me much if she imagined me insincere."

"But have not others told her the same? She would believe you."

"Would you believe me, Miss Emma?"

"I am sure I never doubted you. But tell me, who is the lady?"

"The same little fascinating fairy who captivated Mr. Burk and Trenk at the party of Mrs. Slapdash."

Emma blushed, recalling their commendations of her appearance at the time referred to; but gratified with such delicate praise from Walter, she did not look up or make any reply.

"Have you seen Mr. Trenk this evening?" he asked, changing the subject.

"Only for a moment in the supper-room, where he gave me his exclusive attention. Was it not kind in him?"



"He is always kind to his favorites."

"But am I one of them?"

"Yes, Miss Emma; you have no better friend among your acquaintances. He and Morton talk much of you, always to inquire with great interest."

"It is a great pleasure to have such friends," she remarked. "I know not why they think of me at all."

"Perhaps others think of you also, Miss Emma, who do not express their feelings so freely," and Walter's voice trembled as he spoke.

She hung down her head for an instant, afraid to meet his eyes to ask him for an explanation of this remark. The tone was indicative of more than his words. She turned her beautiful eyes full upon him in their soft splendor, half doubting her own impressions, but only too happy to have them confirmed. At that moment, however, another figure was called, the music once more commenced, and an engaged partner hastened to claim her hand. With a sweet smile to Walter, she hastened away.

Mr. Parker felt rather elated at his meaning being so fully comprehended without further explanation. It is true he had neither intended to make a declaration at the time, nor wished the pretty fair one to believe him a lover as yet. But in his annoyance at the previous conversation with Chester, he forgot for once to be on his guard with the beautiful orphan, whom he never had by word or action deceived. He thought her complexion shone with unusual brilliancy at his avowal, while he felt conscious he was now irretrievably in love. But he had no cause to be displeased with her manner of receiving the vague avowal of his affections.

Thus restored to his usual flow of light spirits, he began to take a more hopeful view of the probable effects of Ches-



ter's disclosures respecting Trenk. Walter hoped it would lead to a clearing up of some of the mystery surrounding Nathan's family connexions, where the enigmatical Mr. Parker found himself completely at fault through all the circumstances heretofore mentioned. He was sorely annoyed at finding himself perplexed when he would much prefer perplexing others. But as neither he nor others could understand Nathan, he wished his birth and parentage explained, even if it should cause him some slight annoyance. Walter had no doubt the people at the Druidoaks knew Nathan's history. Perhaps he was the natural son of some foreign nobleman, of some distinguished lady abroad, the right heir to an estate and title the possessor wrongfully withheld. Walter made a thousand conjectures on the subject, but dismissed at once with contempt the supposition of Trenk's ever being a pauper-boy at Randall's Island.

Again the mischief-loving little gentleman imagined innumerable difficulties the disagreeable Chester would meet with in making himself conspicuous as the source of information in this affair. A sardonic smile was visible on his face as two ladies approached where he was standing. The laughter-loving widow, Mrs. Malcomb, was the first to speak.

"Mr. Parker, as a solitary recluse in a corner, does not seem to be in a melancholy mood."

"Having found this harbor of refuge, dear ladies, I experience great happiness in the sense of security."

"What is the awful danger impending over so invaluable a member of society?" asked his particular friend, the young and witty Mrs. Walters.

"Behold, madam, the express-car waltz now at full speed, sixty miles to the hour by the orchestra time-table. The



panting beauties are kicking up such a dust with their pair of animated drivers, that if I don't clear the track no one can tell where I may be tossed. Smothered in hoops. Think of that for a coroner's verdict on my untimely fate."

"Right, sir. Self-preservation I perceive is the first law in your code," said Mrs. Walters, smiling.

"Not extinguished by a war-whoop," continued Walter, "nor with a hooping-cough; but quietus made by the hoops of a more destructive character."

Mrs. Malcomb hastened to ask if he had heard the awful story about Trenk at Randall's Island.

"I am afraid it is only too true," answered Walter, with much gravity. "Harry Chester swears he and Trenk used the same soap, towel, and tooth-brush at that place, and Chester ought to know."

"Absurd! Mr. Chester was in China."

"True, in broken-china in the kitchen, among the delf-ware; a delfic oracle, no doubt, that foretells what you may expect for dinner. Chester was down below among the culinary antipodes to put a gridiron round the world."

The ladies moved on to leave Mr. Parker to his meditations alone. When the company was dispersing, when Nathan was quitting the side of Claudia, Walter approached to speak to him in a stage whisper, with hand to the side of his mouth. "Methinks the chevalier is sad. Wherefore that brow of night in the presence of Aurora. Have you permitted the idle words of gossip to visit her ears too roughly? Was that a smile sinister I saw before me when you were near her hand?"

"Have you, Mr. Parker, heard the trash afloat about me?"

"Never mind that nonsense, Nathan; the purse will pull



you through with Claudia: only stable-boys now talk of pedigree."

"Yet I dislike any public discussion of my early history."

"So do likewise many more men of wealth, of Eau-reservoir avenue, who are more familiar with Murray Hill than Murray's grammar. They, too, dislike allusions to ancestry. Per-ann has taken the place of it."

"My position in society will not be affected. But the talk, the talk about the matter will be unpleasant."

"If Claudia is all right, never mind the palaver. But will she come up to time when the final round is called for bridesmaids—the bouquet holders at Grace church?"

Nathan gave him a look of derisive scorn, with a who-would-refuse-me curl of the lip.

"Well, well, Nathan, to be sure Mufti does this, Mufti can do that, and you are the grand Mufti. But have a care, as Morton would say, her congeal-iality looks omnibus. People sometimes asking for a warm rib get only the cold shoulder."

---

## CHAPTER XXXV.

ALMOST any day, about the hour of noon, Mr. Pactolus might be found in a private side-room of the club. It was the hour consecrated to the important and no less arduous duties devolving upon him from his exalted position in society. Mr. Pactolus is at the time now referred to deeply absorbed in perusing the advertising pages of the morning journals, wherein he finds ample scope for the vigorous exercise of his useful mind. His favorite columns are those devoted to



the progress of personal, matrimonial, and astrological information in the nineteenth century.

His own contributions to that popular species of light literature appear under the appropriate heads. "If the elegant young lady with 'beautiful eyes,' who rode down town in a Fourth Avenue stage last week, will only send her address to Mr. Kid Glove, she will soothe the lacerated heart of one whom she has crushed with a compound fracture." "A young gentleman of ample fortune, with impaired health, and eyes weakened by too close an application to his theological studies, desires to form the acquaintance of a winning young lady with a view to matrimony, and a visit to Palestine or the Pyramids." "A venerable old man who has lived for three-score years in a hermit's cave upon roots and herbs, and upon the limpid water of a holy spring, having received the gift of mystical lore, can impart knowledge of the future to young females who may wish from laudable motives to be instructed in coming events. Address in Canal street, free of charge."

"There, now," said he, throwing down the paper and turning to William Anthon, who was reading a book—a quiet young gentleman, the only occupant of the apartment with him; "there, now my work appears beautiful in print this morning. Here is my first advertisement 'to meet the eye' of a half hundred who will take it to their sweet selves in that Fourth Avenue line, which is a female line of descent down town in the middle of the day. The second performance is like unto it, but more divine, with a theological squab in full feather for feminine tea-parties. Fancy me, William, in the character, and—faint. But the third is the masterpiece, in which my appearance as principal of the most popular free academy of the age must command admiration; un



doubtedly a virtuous enterprise, for it will be its own reward."

This branch of the morning's labors being disposed of, Pactolus seized a pack of cards, which he handled with much dexterity on the table before him. Soon was he absorbed in the mysteries of the "Mississippi steamboat shuffle," a trick upon whose mastery he had set his heart. When wearied of this occupation, he once more addressed his companion to engage in a desultory conversation. At last allusion was made to Nathan and the scene at the fancy ball, that induced Pactolus to indulge in a monologue on the topic, while Anthon resumed his book in silence.

"Trenk is a gentleman, must be admitted. He has always plenty of cash; the precious spondulicks, better than charity, not only covering a multitude of sins but burnishing them into crowning glories. Does not your fat friend, the hoary-bearded Burk—Burk on the sublime and ridiculous—say that Trenk pays like an Emperor, whereby his suit is granted by the tailor ere credit is asked? Burk, you know, borrows from no man living—only from Shakespeare—whom he declares he will settle with on the Rialto. But if Trenk wants blood, we must cut him, William. What is to become of us if we mingle our blue veins with one who has no more of the ethereal ichor than a dried mackerel? This would bring us to a pretty pickle, a sort of aristocodocracy not mentioned by Plato or Brigham Young in their approved forms of government.

"Will you, will you, William, take warning? Look at the obloquy Trenk will bring upon our order; for we stand upon our order, and he must go at once. Think of this and weep. Weep in an overflow of the buttermilk of human kindness distilled into crocodilian dew-drops dripping from



the lachrymal reservoirs of your ocular brewery. But wipe him out of your memory with a herculean effort and a sweet-scented cambric properly applied to the inner angle of your dexter visual orb."

Mr. Pactolus slowly shuffled the cards as he permitted the stream of his remarks to flow majestically onward in the golden sands of his eloquence.

"Will you, will you, William Anthon, take warning. Soon will tribulation come upon you; for mourning is heard at the Foundling. Her 'Babes' are in deep grief, wading above their knees in affliction. The horn of gladness is no longer exalted with the oil of juniper, vulgarly called gin. Her glory has departed. The Foundling looks seedy—with the aspect of superannuated summer horticulture after a frost; the gates thereof languish. She covereth herself with sackcloth, with doeskin casimeres, with the clouds of darkness, with the dust of Harlem Lane. How are the mighty fallen; her pillars laid low. Oh, that her head were a fountain of tears to weep night and day for this stain upon her children. Oh, that she had a lodge in the wilderness, free from mankind, including the gorilla family; the wings of the wild pigeon to fly to the forest at Jones's Woods, and be at rest on a merry-go-round; a desert for a dwelling-place in some first-class hotel, where, athirst, she might drink the bitter waters of acetic acidulated Jersey cider, with headache and bottle of Saratoga hair invigorator before breakfast.

"Will you, will you, William, weep for this mother to the 'Babes?' A calamity has fallen upon her worse than the pestilence walking at noonday; worse than the blasting simoom winged with the arrows of death through the watches of the night; worse than hand-organ with monkey, Marseillaise, tambourine, extra excruciation, disturbing love's



young dream in the junior juveniles of this respectable institution. Her brows are racked with pain, her lips parched with heat, her cheeks withered as shrivelled branches in autumn, spoiling her features generally in an ornamental anatomical point of view. Food upon silver dishes has lost its savor, sparkling wine its delight, terrapin is out of season, and asparagus, a Marshal Grouchy vegetable, has not come up. Crystal tubes refuse their suck, fragrant weeds their narcotic balm. Many will perish before finding Ponce de Leon's fabulous fountain of perpetual youth in the Cristadoro hair-dye. The summer rose buds not in beauty; its leaves are scattered on the ground to fade like her hopes, with no Jolly restorative known to scientific steam renovators. Misery stalks through silent halls disconsolate; the old girl wringing her wrinkled hands with frightful waste of an imaginary pound of soap. The harp of revelry is hushed, the gridiron hung up, the golden bowl of mirth is broken; the saucepan is mute; cold winds sweep through lofty corridors to sigh a parting requiem over sullied honor, fallen grandeur, and dilapidated fancy shirt-collars.

"Will you, will you, William, weep for this decline in starch? A rumor has gone forth to overcome her as a summer compliment in a special train. It is whispered in hymn-books, it is muttered in Hoyle, and a jewsharp caught faintly the sound as it fell. It is heard on Porcelain Terrace, known in Malachite Place, learned in Jasper Square, repeated in Topaz Row, understood in Cream-laid Avenue, and breathed softly at the shrine of St. Lapislazuli—'pauper-boy—poor fellow—Randall's Island—what a pity—no father, no mother—the vulgar wretch—is still poor—the villain—works for his money—the swindling impostor.'

"Oh, will you, will you, William Anthon, take warning?



It was told in confidence to Sister Agatha in the chapel of the Agnus, at matins; communicated under a brown veil, and a veil of secrecy, in this vale of tears to Sister Agnes at vespers; and the news comes to that saint on earth, Mother Ursula, their lady abbess in prospective, as she enters for the morning lessons on the day of high festival, with her dog-train of poodle pets, nursed in a lap-land, rather a cold corner lot peradventure for connubial comfort. These angels, you must know, are in strict communion with each other, in the hope of reviving a society suitable for their dark ages, which set in severely with black silks, sombre velvets, and dismal shawls, after forty years' run in single harness, in a one horse concern, with some occasional fast driving clandestinely, which, O no, we'll never mention now, its name is never heard at the four o'clock of their afternoon of life, when they are walking up to settle at the captain's office of Mrs. Grundy's establishment.

"With them this star of the morning was a favorite, William Anthon; a Charles the First, Blenheim, Black and Tan, or other puppy, being so delightfully wicked, wealthy, fashionable, high-born, with fascinating manners, splendid accomplishments, and all the modern improvements. But now it is changed, and they cast him into outer darkness, the gas-meter cut off, with their beaming eyes turned to heaven like saints expiring, or ducks in thunder, thankful, joyous, for a happy release from the depravity in this bad, bad, bad world. The 'illusion' they had been under, 'the golden chain,' was broken, broken as the last link that bound the iron ladle to the street water-plug, and they threw him off with no certificate for out-door relief.

"Will you, will you, William, leave your card, compliments, and condolence where streets clothe their granite



sorrow in straw or saw-dust, where heart-broken bell handles muffle their silver-plated palpitations in appropriate crape? But what can the Foundlings do, William Anthon? What balm of Minerva is in store for the 'Babes?' What Paphian Lotion, with a never-Phalon supply? He was unto them guide, counsellor, and friend, an apple-tree among the trees of the woods, a whole orchard in fact put down in clover; a graceful roe upon Schooley's Mountain; a fig-tree, shooting forth her green figs at Flushing; a vine with the tender grapes, giving a good smell at Croton Point; a bundle of myrrh brought to the bridal chamber of Lovejoy's Hotel, at the corner of Beekman street, and the pine board Park barracks, frescoed in whitewash; spikenard, sending forth its gladness at the Fulton market; a cluster of camphire in the lumber yards of Hoboken. In his presence the winter was past, the rain gone and over, the flowers appeared on the earth, the time of warbling had come, the voice of the turtle was heard in the land, and a voice at Downing's calling for more turtle. Dove's eyes within his locks, lips dropping honey and cream upon the tip of his tongue. His garments had the aroma of musk and cinnamon, the oil of roses, of West End, of new mown hay, of jockey club, of hyacinth, like the smell of Lubin. The banquet was made for him, and for laughter. He and wine brought mirth; his song, with the viol, the harp, and the lute pumped up tears and tenderness, with rejoicing, through the vigils of the night, until the day-breaking, the shadows flew away when they won't go home to morning, till daylight doth appear.

"Will you, will you, William, take warning or something to drink? But now all this has vanished, hath affliction hath come upon them. Why are they thus punished; in what transgressed? Had they not kept all the commandments contain-



ed in the books of the kingdom of fashion; had they not observed all the edicts of the exclusive empire; had they not observed the statutes enacted for the inner circle of the terra cotta portion of humanity? Wherein had they suffered contamination by contact with the base manners, customs, laws, religion, or morality established for the lower orders of mankind? Was it for this they despised a father's counsels until their old commissary of subsistence, the skin-flint Judean, threatened to cut them off with a shekel: or scoffed the tender entreaties of a mother praying nightly with a broken heart, in curl-papers and camel's hair pink satin robe; or sneered at a sister, till she pronounced them odious, a goose; or snubbed a younger brother, who inscribed his feeling in rage and red-chalk—s-k-n-o-bb-nothin-shorter-he-is. Was it for this they had worn out parental patience, and patent latch-key; that they had given string-halt, spavin, and staggers to the saddle and coach-horses in the stable; kissed the maid in the laundry, courted the seamstress up stairs, wrote with bad pen and worse spelling Byron's Fare-thee-well to the governess, put their sleeve round the French *bonne* instead of the baby, and avowed a resolve to run off with a daughter of the corner baker? Was it for this—but it is no matter about the pretty widow, young orphan, or innocent country girl. Did tailor, hat, shoe, or shirt-maker ever question their style or taste. Did marker at faro bank, billiards, or bowling-alley ever cease to admire them? Were not their patent-leather gaiter-boots beauties, their Jouvin-gloves perfections, their linen cambrics inimitable, their perfumes inaccessible, their jewels unrivalled? In a word, were they not excellence itself from the tips of their toes to the delicate manipulations of the curling tongs? In their personal associations no intermixing with plebeians, no fellowship save with the best pedigree.



They had shunned with dainty tread promiscuous intercourse, picking their steps on tip-toe through society, to select those only whose fathers were neither of a city guild nor breathed in the retail trade the impure air of oil, molasses, soap, and shad, or sold hides in the swamp. Two generations only could obliterate such stains, with perseverance and Daley's pain-extractor from the family book-muslin. And now with all this high precaution, they have run their heads against the low, vulgar, rough, blue lime-stone walls of that refuge for pauper children, Randall's Island."

"Stop a moment in your lamentations, Jeremiah, junior," exclaimed Anthon, laying down his book and seizing the arm of Pactolus. "Stop a moment, thou worthy grandson of Hilkiiah the prophet, and listen. What is that loud talking in the saloon?"

Without waiting for information they rushed from the apartment, to find the "Babes" hastening on all sides to meet in a common centre in the spacious refectory, resplendent with frescoes, marbles, paintings, curtains, and mirrors. At a small table sat Morton Burk, silent in solemn grandeur, amid the uproar, seeking solace in libations of brandy, with clouds of tobacco-smoke of his own creating. He was soon overwhelmed with questions from every quarter, to which, however, he paid not the slightest apparent attention. "I say, Morton, tell us all about it?" "Is it a fight, or only a come off?" "Who are the parties?" with fifty more interrogatories of like nature, as they closed around him. The fat young gentleman was, however, in no great haste to gratify their impatient curiosity. Not opening his lips, except to inhale air for the inflation of his lungs, he puffed away at his pipe till his face was furrowed with bitter wrinkles; while wreaths of smoke in dense volume encircling his head and



white beard, induced his tormentors to widen their distance to enlarge the area of his freedom.

Morton kept his eyes steadily upon them, only removing his fixed gaze from one to the other without any further recognition of their presence. If he knew aught of an impending duel, it was evident he was not willing to make any revelations. But in all probability he was more disposed to learn than instruct. As the Babes therefore fell off, breaking into small groups, and laying each other under contribution, they jointly formed a stock of news which, although vague, inaccurate, and contradictory withal, was better than total ignorance.

No one doubted Mr. Chester had opened a hostile correspondence with Walter Parker, founded in some way upon Nathan's juvenile history. Some said it was for introducing Trenk into society; some for Walter's denial of Chester's assertion about Nathan's refuge at Randall's Island; some for his disbelief in the soap, towel, and tooth-brush reciprocity; others had different versions of the difficulty. They said Chester, wishing his own nurture at the pauper institute to be ignored, had taken this absurd mode to hush it up, by demanding a retraction of what Walter had communicated on the subject; that Chester's father had been slandered in the talk of his being a former convict; that it grew out of a remark about the family being musical, one member being at Sing-Sing while another was at Singapore; that one was packing opium while another was picking oakum. All, however, believed Parker had perpetrated something audaciously impudent and witty. Envious effects of a good name!

Although numerous groups were thus discussing with much animation the same question, yet all were irresistibly drawn



to a small coterie upon hearing the name of Mr. Charles Nevil repeated several times in that quarter. As they drew near in dense array one of the speakers remarked: "My dear fellow, you are mistaken—he was never in the State Prison. But he ought to have gone, which, I suppose, is the reason why he did not."

"It is probable the jury were the best judges of that."

"He was never tried; but he ought to have been indicted."

"What did he do?" a half-dozen inquired.

Hereupon the first speaker narrated the leading facts respecting the missing bonds mentioned in a former chapter, adding many rhetorical embellishments which, in his fervor, his brilliant imagination supplied. Then, drawing from his pocket a printed slip, cut from what seemed to be an old discolored newspaper, he read aloud the slashing editorial of the Sunday Retrospect on Mr. Chester the elder, the father of the China consul.

The young patricians listened attentively to the recital, not moving at all, save to extinguish a cigar, adjust a hat, or lean heavily with both hands on a diminutive, bending cane. The silence was profound as the reading proceeded, nor could it be said to be broken at the close, when the crowd dispersed without a word said, each deeply impressed with the little history of poor Emma's infancy. For they all were either of her acquaintance or had seen her in society. And this, then, was the first great incident of her existence, which had indelibly impressed her subsequent fate and fortune. They recalled her brilliant complexion and teeth, her large, rolling eye, her clear forehead, her splendid hair, her classic features, her sweet smile yet tinged with pensive sorrow; the little beauty whose toilet had been so recently the admiration



of the ladies, who attracted the gentlemen with her winning graces, dressed like a fairy in rose diamonds, or a Peri, fair and innocent from the Pearl Islands.

It may at first seem surprising these gentlemen, young and naturally impulsive, should have not vented some audible indignation at the shameful conduct of Chester towards Mr. Gray, or exhibited some manifestation of heartfelt sympathy for the pretty orphan, Emma. But, in truth, they were too well bred for either, although both emotions of anger and of pity were strong within them. Moreover, something like a sense of shame, of self-reproach, shocked their sensibility in being even silent auditors where a public allusion was thus made to a lady whom they all respected. It was this phase of the proceeding which jarred upon the nerves of Morton Burk, who had listened attentively. Hastily grasping the paper which the youth still had in his hand, he eagerly closed his fingers upon it and tore it to pieces. The young patrician looked up in astonishment as he exclaimed: "I hope I have not offended you, Mr. Burk?"

"No offence, no offence whatever, sir," Morton replied with dignity and feeling. "But you forgot, in your generous ardor, while punishing the guilty you might, unconscious, give pain by calling attention in public to a living and innocent young lady."

"I own it was improper, but the allusion was slight, and had to be made to expose the wretch."

"Many a culprit has been spared," said Morton, laying his ponderous hand kindly upon the gentleman's shoulder. "Many from a merciful consideration. It is hoped the lady will never hear of this; but now let it end for ever. Society is so interwoven, that striving to entangle one of its threads must affect others. Mr. Chester will have cause to bear this



in mind hereafter. And may he work out his own salvation if he can."

While impending duels are generally shrouded in silent mystery, it was far otherwise with those affairs of chivalry which sprang up within the immediate circle of the Foundlings. There the particulars were impartially published as far as known, and the facts disclosed without any reserve.

Whoever has been initiated into the secrets of a female boarding-school, or of a college for youths of the other sex within inflammatory distance, must often have noticed the flutter occasioned by the surreptitious introduction of a love-letter, a contraband missive condemned under the severest penalties, and for which the presiding police are ever on detective service. Yet the outlawed epistle is no less welcome, when forthwith the hero or heroine, as the case may happen, summons in solemn conclave all within a pretty wide circle of confidants, to hear the contents read, and the appropriate comments made upon the momentous occasion, without any fear before their eyes of a descent upon them from the overruling powers. Cadets at West Point hold similar pyrotechnic courts of anxious inquiry, with the sergeant of the guard sometimes officiating as a candlestick.

Thus the "Babes," among themselves, without any dread of paternal, maternal, or metropolitan police spoiling the sport, in a pistol and coffee correspondence, impart their information freely, and express their opinions decidedly within the mystic limits. For it is only garrulous old age that talks too much abroad, regardless of confidence or consequences. In youth too much feeling and imagination abound for conversational purposes to require any resort to facts, important facts, to become interesting; while "the oldest inhabitant,"



having lost both his freshness and fancy, will tell you any important secret only to gain a patient hearing.

The information of the Foundlings would have been more accurate had they not suffered their heated brains to supply them with news. For, as yet, the affair was very simple, nothing of importance transpiring, and might end in a brief explanation. The second of Chester was Mr. Anthon, a fine young fellow, who waited on Walter with a polite note desiring to know, in substance, if he had in any manner given countenance to the story that Mr. Chester was ever an inmate on Randall's Island; intimating that a written answer was expected, which could be delivered to the bearer. Instead of answering the note, however, Walter desired to consult a friend, to whom he would refer Mr. Anthon, who, in due time, was apprised that Harry Dace was to appear in that amiable character in the approaching drama.

Thus far the campaign had opened when the first bulletin was published, which was unsatisfactory, as first bulletins are known to be. Anthon and Dace had not yet met about the matter, and it is their interview which must now be described. Both were of the Foundlings; and one afternoon, several days subsequent to the reading of the Sunday Retrospect, these two heralds from the opposing camps met in the club. Neither had thought fit to provide himself with a stenographer and corps of reporters from a morning newspaper office—the first great oversight. Nor had they prepared paragraphs for the forthcoming correspondence—the second lamentable error. Both were thinking of their principals instead of themselves—the third deplorable indiscretion. The seconds were not anxious for its ending in an exchange of shots—the fourth mistake,



with such a rare opportunity to appear conspicuously in print.

They encountered each other in the billiard-room, when accidentally the tables were unoccupied and no one present. When Dace entered, Anthon was chalking a cue preparatory to some solo practice on the spot-ball. With a familiar nod to Walter's friend, he proceeded to pocket the red. Then leisurely replacing it on the table, he carelessly asked Dace what was the news. After some further unimportant remarks, Anthon called his attention to the affair with which they were intrusted, hoping soon for an answer to Chester's note. "I suppose," he added, "it will all blow over with some kind of apology, and thus end the matter." Dace, however, surprised him with the information that Walter did not intend offering an apology. "That is unlucky," Anthon quietly remarked, as he again pocketed the red, and turning, cried: "Rather a good shot, Harry?"

"Who's a good shot; not Chester, I hope?"

"Not at all. I was thinking of my spot-ball in the pocket. But what is to be done about this confounded quarrel?" laying down his cue to light a cigar, and offering another to his companion. "Let us arrange it in some way."

"I apprehend some trouble will be in that," Dace replied.

"What! You don't want a fight to come off?" exclaimed Anthon, in some surprise. "You are not on unfriendly terms with my man?"

"If I were," Mr. Dace said; "if I were, I would deem myself incapable of acting in this business. I trust our sense of honor would not permit participation in an affair of this delicacy with inimical feelings to an adversary."

"You are right, old fellow; quite right," said Anthon; "I



beg your pardon for my unguarded remark ; no gentleman would touch a case under such circumstances."

"If he did it would be only to bring on a fight, not an explanation ; to stamp him as rather a low fellow. But, touching our present difficulty, I am much afraid it portends war."

"If it is becoming serious, then let us talk seriously," said Anthon. "Where is your protocol, for I trust myself only with written despatches?"

Hereupon Mr. Dace handed a note in reply to Chester's demand for a retraction of the slander on his character. As it was addressed to Mr. Anthon, that young gentleman leisurely read it, taking the cigar from his lips to give it a second perusal, written in something like the following words :

"In answer to Mr. Chester's note in regard to the story of his being formerly an inmate of Randall's Island, Mr. Parker would reply that a preliminary matter has first to be settled. He is informed by several gentlemen that Mr. Chester gives him as authority for a similar slander upon Mr. Trenk. Whenever Mr. Chester thinks proper to do Mr. Parker justice by correcting that error, he will attend to his present demand. Until then he must decline to give any explanation."

Anthon folded up the note, remarking at the same time : "This looks very much like gunpowder, with mountain howitzers on horseback."

"I am apprehensive it is so ; but not the howitzers, I hope."

"Well, Mr. Dace, we shall see. Mr. Parker refuses to give any explanation?"

An affirmative nod was the only reply returned to this question, as the two gentlemen parted.

On a former occasion it was well known when Mr. Dace was challenged, Anthon acted as his friend. Hence they had been on the best terms ever since, especially as they mutually



admired each other's conduct at that trying period. The second insisting on the hostile meeting taking place in a room with shots to be exchanged across a table, the opposite party protested against the distance as barbarous, as contrary to the code ; whereupon, through the intervention of friends, amicable relations were established.

Mr. Anthon now sought his principal with the answer received from Walter. A duel seemed inevitable ; but it did not come off so soon as might be fairly expected. Several interviews, attended with long, earnest conversations, took place between Chester and his friend, until finally Mr. Anthon left him in disgust, declaring he would have nothing more to do with the affair, and dropping the China consul's acquaintance. It was supposed Mr. Chester insisted on further negotiations being opened with Walter, which might lead to mutual explanations or retractions, but Mr. Anthon declined to be accessory to such unwarrantable proceedings.

The "Babes" soon after, from some source, received the second authentic and now satisfactory bulletin. Mr. Chester had demanded of Mr. Parker to withdraw the assertion that he ever was a pauper-boy at Randall's Island, which Walter had refused. This brief announcement revealed the whole story, the truth, the whole truth. As Mr. Anthon thought proper to drop Chester from his list of speaking acquaintances, as Mr. Dace had followed Anthon's example, and as the Foundlings followed every new fashion, either in the cut of garment or gentleman, they ignored the consul's presence henceforth and for evermore. No doubt was in their minds where he received his early nurture and education.

In the meantime, while this excitement was blowing in almost a tempest at the club, Nathan, the unconscious cause of it all, was happily ignorant of the storm. He was with-



out the track of the wind-currents which would bear the information to him. Immediately after quitting the fancy ball he repaired to his rooms, where two letters lay upon his table unopened, to his address. One was from an eminent lawyer, calling his particular attention to an important cause set down for argument within six weeks, at Washington, in the Supreme Court. This announcement was a stunning blow, as he had something like a verbal assurance from the other side, of the case being postponed to the next term. Being, moreover, a pet one to Nathan, he had resolved to prepare himself in it for an unusual display before this high tribunal. Here, he thought, was a golden opportunity lost for distinction in his profession, which might not soon again occur. But regrets were idle; therefore he resolved to set vigorously to work.

The other letter was of a different nature, from a musical impressario, imploring in most piteous expressions, Nathan's assistance in bringing out some lyric attraction and ballét for the ensuing Christmas holidays now fast approaching; beseeching also his kind offices with the reporters for the press, to insure their favorable notice to the public in advance. Feeling much sympathy for the worthy artist in distress, and not unmindful also of several deserving favorites dependent on the impressario for their comfort, Nathan laid down the note with a sigh of despair at the work in prospective, while he mentally promised himself to lend a hearty, helping hand.

These two pressing engagements, of such opposite interest, confined Nathan within certain limits, so that he had neither time nor inclination to stray into society, or even drop down upon the club for a passing hour. He had met none of his fashionable friends for several weeks, nor indeed



any of his up-town associates from whom to learn the current news or city gossip. Walter and Morton, supposing the rumors about Randall's Island had influenced him to shrink from publicity, only waited for a fitting occasion to afford him some comfort, hoping every day to meet him down town. Indeed they were planning a visit to his rooms, when Nathan quite unexpectedly one evening walked into the club.

His advent was so sudden as to produce a sensation among those who had not decided on the reception they should accord to him, which the change of circumstances imposed or seemed to impose upon them. But if their manners were stiff and formal at first, Nathan did not indicate any perception of it. With his usual bland, courteous, winning address, he accosted all as formerly, and soon the frost upon their welcome melted away under the genial warmth of his charming, sprightly conversation. Among the musical novelties then in rehearsal were several tender, sparking gems, which, in his present pleasant mood, he was fain to sing for the "Babes" around him for their fascination. Seating himself therefore at a piano, he afforded them one of those exquisite entertainments too novel and delightful ever to be forgotten. Joining next in the general conversation, he modestly patronized some of the rich patricians with a word, look, or nod, while he complimented others in various modes most acceptable to them, till all believed he had never been half so interesting or agreeable. It was late when he departed; but the reputation left behind was rich in general admiration and good wishes.

---



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE reception of Nathan at the club had thus been cordial. Yet the slight coolness exhibited on his entrance made him somewhat suspicious, to put him on his guard. He perceived a change had come over his friends, which now induced him to scan every familiar countenance with that penetrating glance retained from his humble if not indigent boyhood. The lambs at the church of the Agnus Dei were not so joyous when he nestled among them on the following Sunday, nor did that zone of millinery and diamonds, the dress circle at the opera, emit its wonted smiling beams on his approach. Clouds also appeared on the horizon of his fashionable world. Some ladies who heretofore were most caressing, had now risen to the serenely condescending. Gentlemen, too, who in former times were very willing to hail Nathan as an intimate friend, had suddenly become patronizing and disagreeable. This change in the social atmosphere portended storms. The excessive warmth surrounding his happy existence, attracted, as a natural consequence, a counter-current, which he perceived would soon send down upon him a tempest.

The fickleness of human nature is proverbial, the upper segment of humanity being the most changeable of all. At this time several causes were at work to affect the contentment and complacency of the Avenue. Impostors came as grievous afflictions. A fascinating young moustache had honored the springs with his presence at the summer solstice. He had "swung corners" in quadrilles with much modesty until promoted to a *vis-à-vis*, finally to find favor and his sleeve around some aristocratic sensitive tendrils in the seductive waltz. On the strength of such innocent playfulness, he



renewed the intimacy when returning to town, strewing thick his autumnal cards in the Vallombrosa streams of fashion. Soon his light barque, freighted with impudence alone, when fairly launched floated along in the ever-swelling flood into a large exclusive acquaintance.

Some unfortunate researches, however, in the heralds' office of the metropolitan directory revealed his domains lying on the confines of the Third Avenue, where within a vaulted saloon, resplendent with frescoes, and arabesques, oriental fountains and Carian marbles, Saracenic baths and perfumes, this modern Saladin displayed his proud banner on the outer walls, with shield bearing a bar sinister, argent, pale, with ribbons pendent, serpentine, azure, and ensanguined with a bleeding razor.

Other false knights came with forged missives from foreign lands. A white-bearded Baron from the frozen Baltic, and a bilious Prince from the base of burning Vesuvius, were both found wanting in ancestral and auriferous dust. A dashing foreign officer, a gallant troubadour, gaily touched his guitar as he was hastening home from the war, to lay his light fingers on other people's property, as he ever sang "Still so gently o'er me stealing." Trials of like nature came frequent upon these delicate souls, with never-ending tribulations and troubles. To be sure, misfortunes always come wedlocked, if any comfort be in that reflection; yet if one would make a visit for all, a spare bed-room of hearth-rug amplitude might be accorded with Christian resignation. But coming in troops, they spoil cooking and complexion, even religious consolation, destructive alike to dignity and dinners, bringing in their train fits of indigestion and disgust.

An angry brow was nursed by many whose hallowed realms had thus been desecrated. They were willing to make



an example of the first hapless youth found poaching on their preserves, to send him bound and bleeding to the Ukraine, for they were truly in a Tartar mood. Poor Nathan was the first one caught, and forthwith sent a culprit on a mission to the Cossacks. His offence was flagrant—a nameless pauper orphan-boy, without a rag of redeeming vice to cover his virtuous impudence, who never even dreamed he dwelt in marble halls with slaves and vassals by his side!

This nomination for foreign service was confirmed by the mutual protective senate, who took it into consideration. Indeed public opinion demanded some suitable outfit for him under the circumstances. “A young man without fortune or family, in fact without a name, ought,” it was said over and over again in secret session, “to keep out of company. True, he does not gamble, as they said of him, which to be sure might supply him with funds for dissipation and extravagance. But now when it is known he has no money, except the sorry pittance earned in writing law-papers, it will never do to encourage him in expenses far beyond his limited means. His manners, his dress, are excellent; his talents, acquirements, accomplishments, indeed, his personal appearance, remarkable. He may turn these to account teaching music, dancing, superintending Sunday-schools, a leader of Philharmonics, directing church-melody, private concerts, managing artists at parties, an Ethiopian minstrel, or at the Volks Garten—a thousand things. But to think of his visiting you as an equal, an acquaintance, that is another affair. He would, poor fellow, soon find himself out of his element, out of his proper sphere and depth. No doubt he has merit, very great merit, which ought to be encouraged; not, however, by receiving his visits when gentlemen are calling, when he would soon perceive his presence was not desirable. There



is, in short, too much of this fraternizing already with the lower orders. Who knows where he lives; perhaps his mother takes in washing, or begs broken victuals. One cannot be too particular now-a-days; and remember, Thomas, Thomas remember, when Mr. Trenk calls, say we are engaged. It is improper for the footman always to be fibbing 'not at home,' 'gone out,' and other Opie-ates to the exigencies of the moment, Paley-atives to the conscience, as the wicked, witty Mr. Pactolus calls them.

"What pleasure this unknown can take in our set is a mystery past finding out. Nothing is in common between him and us. They say he is moral, exemplary in his habits, honorable, very industrious, with such a good heart! Right glad indeed to hear it. Valuable points for a life-membership in the Bible Society or Young Men's Christian Association. Mr. Sabina would do something to aid in that way, and surely he is pious and philanthropic enough in all reason; the very salt of society, its inexhaustible fountain of moral flavor, keeping us in perpetual supply of sanctimonious purity. But who ever heard of such recommendations for an *entrée* into our exclusive circle? The mode for this month is not yet clear-starched cambric cravat, with clear conscience, velvet coat-collar, very silly talk, and vermicelli hair. No, no! no more of this, if you please. If new people must be inflicted upon us, let them not come from the inferior classes in the city. If we must barter away ourselves, let it be, as the rural advertisements have it, 'in exchange for cash and country produce.' What you say of his efforts to rise to distinction, his professional ambition, and popularity at the bar, may all be true; but it is idle to run counter to the opinion of friends, to set up as a reformer, to be called odd. Submission to custom and common sense is unavoidable. It



is not proper to countenance this young man; it may be a hardship to him, but cannot be helped."

While public sentiment was thus congealing around Nathan, to isolate him in its transparent crystals, he expressed no opinion on the sentence of condemnation; at least he made no resistance to his fate, no murmur passed his lips, no complaint reached his friends. It was doubtful if the doom were revealed to him, so apathetic or unconscious did he appear. Walter Parker would have given an ear to know what Trenk had learned of his sudden eclipse, or what he thought of the base heresy among his former worshippers. But Nathan had nothing to say; he made no sign; and Walter, mystified, felt provoked. Would nothing start his Dutch phlegm into mobility? Mr. Parker was perplexed—a frame of mind worse to him than the torments of Hades. It is retributive justice sometimes to punish a malefactor with his own favorite instrument of torture.

In the meanwhile Nathan worked away diligently at his law for the court, with his lyrics and ballét for the impresario. He had no time as yet for friends, dissipation, and visiting. He reserved all that for New Year's day, now near at hand. Then he intended to take the field in full force. There was a fine fall of snow; the sleighing was excellent, and his Arctic equipage superb, with a gallant span of bay horses.

When the eventful morning arrived, the morning of the ever-memorable carnival in metropolitan annals, Nathan was once more free from business to drive with loose rein through all the exciting pleasures of the universal holiday. Adorning his handsome figure in a full suit of evening toilet, he prepared for the day his extensive lady-visiting list with unusual care, excluding none entitled to any notice. Contem-



plating his manly features in the full-length mirror with much complacency, a slight smile of satisfaction played about the corner of his mouth. Perhaps his lips were compressed with unusual firmness. His eye indicated some emotion within more marked than admiration for his external appearance. He was looking for the glass to reflect his thoughts, to exchange salutations with inward pride, courage, and contempt.

Before the hour of noon, throwing himself into his luxurious, dazzling equipage, with visiting-list in his white kid-gloved hand, he gave his orders to the driver in the voice of a Czar. Soon were his fiery steeds flying over the crisp snow with reindeer speed on a frozen sea. But at frequent intervals the graceful animals were checked, that he might leap out to rush into friendly mansions to exchange the usual salutations of the joyous season. His reception, however, was not as formerly. For the most part he was met with a reserve, a coolness, a restraint visible or felt. Sometimes it escaped in a look, sometimes in a tone, sometimes in a word or passing remark, but in general in the want of that kind civility accorded to all on this happy day. Sometimes a back was too conspicuous, or a shoulder too prominent, a greeting not returned, his compliments unnoticed, if an adoring crowd or hum of conversation permitted. He often entered without a friendly grasp of the hand, and was allowed to depart with a formal bow. As the hours flew by, as he rushed from house to house, through streets, avenues, squares, parks, and places of the extended corso; as new faces perpetually appeared to disappear rapidly, each leaving some vivid, disagreeable, and peculiar remembrance, he endeavored to arrange in his mind all the trials he underwent.

A chill came over his limbs, a sinking at the heart, while



his brow was burning with fever, and temples throbbed in the monotonous beat of a solemn march. But on, on he rushed headlong, desperate, determined to cease only when the whole course was run. His brain was full of harassing memories, from which was no escape, which followed him in full cry like a pack of wolves pursuing their hapless, helpless victim. He felt incapable of courageous action, of vigorous resistance; his nerves were unstrung, his strength gone, borne along passive on the wings of irresistible destiny. At every instant some new wound was inflicted as onward he went. Where he hoped to find a smiling face, he encountered only a cold salute with incipient frown; where the merry laugh was often heard, a silent, stately recognition alone revealed the change. The eye, the lip, the cheek, which once gave him cordial welcome, were now no more the same.

Drooping, shrinking in agony and shame, he hurried on, wishing the day were done and he far distant from the sight and sound of persons once endeared to him. Almost fainting at the thought of leaving his happy world behind, he saw before him a desert desolate of all he loved so well. But at times when life and all animation had departed, when he wished to give o'er without the strength or will to order it, some unexpected greeting with former genial warmth would come again; some generous pressure of the hand would thrill electric through his veins. Like the refreshing stream to weary limbs, like a bright star in despairing darkness, like a cooling breeze to feverish brow, like a cottage light to benighted traveller, like a gentle maiden ministering sympathy at the couch of suffering, came these demonstrations of esteem and kindness, the more appreciated as they were the more limited in number.

At last the list was ended, the final visit made, with no



more thresholds to pass. Leaping into his sleigh, he shouted "home," in mingled agony and rage. He drew the luxurious furs around him as he threw himself back in the seat, buried in polar robes, to realize that sense of loneliness, of desert isolation from sympathy, a feeling unknown since early boyhood. This day had been the most eventful in his life. Friends had forsaken him, social ties were broken, even common civility rudely denied him, without a warning, without a hearing, without a crime. A storm had bursted on his head, its lightning had blasted him, withering his nerves, blighting his happiness for ever. He felt its fires coursing through every vein, conscious that each and every incident since morning was engraven indelibly on his memory, to rise hereafter, for the most part, hideous and hateful. Crushed to the earth he could not dream of future revenge; too much humbled even to be grateful to those who had not cast him off. What cared they for him now?—incapable alike of further benefit or injury to friend or foe, where he had been once all powerful. But from such abasement often cometh the most unrelenting vengeance as well as never-ending devotion.

Oblivious to external objects when he arrived at his own door, the driver called attention to his waiting before he was induced to ascend to his rooms. A bath and some stimulants, however, restored somewhat his former tone of mind. But when the evening fire blazed in the hearth, when lights illumined the quiet, luxurious apartment, his wonted equanimity partially returned. Carefully and dispassionately he reviewed the events of the day. He knew he was forewarned, and vainly imagined himself forearmed. But he was now amazed at the numbers arrayed against him, which had covered him with confusion. For this he was not prepared, believing bet-



ter things of his better portion of mankind. Nor was he satisfied with the estimate he had put upon his acquaintances. It seemed as if many who at one time manifested the most attachment to him now threw him off, while those who had been formal and distant were now inclined to place him on a better footing.

At first Nathan supposed it was only his intimates who were aware of the recent rumors about him, which might explain their singular conduct, while those who still extended a welcome to him were less enlightened in the current gossip. But this conjecture he soon discarded as too improbable under the circumstances. He was apprised that his history was the theme of conversation for weeks in all circles wherein he visited, where opinions were formed after ample discussion. Trenk now asked himself if they all believed him an orphan pauper. To which his own common sense gave him an affirmative answer. For he had refused to impart any explanation that might at one time have set this falsehood at rest, declining with much firmness to discuss his antecedents in infancy. Walter Parker, to be sure, was content to take his denial of the story, especially as of his own knowledge he was aware Nathan was not in want in boyhood. This, too, was sufficient for some other gentlemen friends too much attached to him to credit anything to his detriment.

But when Walter urged him to explain further, Nathan, with calm gentleness, remarked: "Those who have the secret in their keeping will not disclose the facts; and as I am persuaded they are influenced by a sincere interest in my welfare, I cannot press for any revelations until they see fit to make them."

"Perhaps they have some funds in trust," said Walter,



“which, the truth being known, your rights would compel them to give up.”

To this suggestion Nathan only shook his head in dissent, and the conversation dropped. But his other friends did not know this.

It was now impossible for him to form a right opinion of the motives which influenced persons in their behavior towards him since the unfortunate assertions were made about his early life. He thought the ladies with whom he was in daily intercourse knew him best, with a corresponding interest in his behalf; while others, those whom he saw but seldom, were indisposed to favor much intimacy, would prize him far less. But this was a mistake; yet still a very natural mistake. One set courted his attentions, believing him rich, patrician, and distinguished, with rare accomplishments and innumerable attractions, making him an acknowledged leader of fashion. If they had any appreciation of his merits, they deemed their consideration secondary to other recommendations more attractive to them. When it was proclaimed, however, that he was without both purse and pedigree, with a pauper mark, moreover, against him, Thomas, the footman, received his standing orders for a corresponding change of front.

But an inner circle revolves within the exclusive spheres recognised as fashionable, although not receiving all their laws and opinions with implicit faith as the rule of their conduct. This select set is still more refined because more retiring; more sensitive because not bronzed by nightly dissipation and gas-lights into a golden coarseness; more discriminating, with much time and reflection at command; more fastidious in receiving introductions; more cautious in discarding those whom they have once recognised. Now to



these Mr. Trenk was known remotely, for they could not fail to meet him sometimes. But they marked him for good and evil in such a way as to debar him from their intimacy. His character as a gambler, libertine, dissolute spendthrift, would have closed their portals firm against him, had not their just, their proportionally high appreciation of his accomplishments, his prepossessing figure, his soft, winning manners induced them to tolerate him as a casual visitor, or as an ornamental guest useful at their entertainments.

But the recent developments concerning his past career had taken them by surprise, creating an unusual interest, while affording much material for agreeable meditation. "His merits, then," said they, "were all his own, which could not be denied; the rumors of his dissolute habits were swept away to oblivion, while those moral qualities, constituting solid worth, were found most wonderful, germinating in perfection in an unpropitious soil in the bosom of a little orphan, perhaps a pauper; destitute, at least, of sedulous parental training, indispensable in boyhood. He needed no ancestors to accord him the prestige of gentility; he had given his own patent of gentleman under his own sign manual; more wonderful, indeed, than his music, his voice, his grace, intellect, intelligence, his manners and his person. With professional ambition, popular at the bar, industrious, moral, honorable, with a good heart, and fast rising to the front rank in legal distinction—these surely entitle him to notice and esteem. But the story of his refuge at the asylum is not proven to be authentic; no one will vouch for it; he contradicts it; almost a pity that he does, poor fellow; for how much more would he have our sympathy as well as our admiration. James, we receive this evening. James, remem-



ber, please remember, James, when Mr. Trenk calls, we are always happy to receive him."

How could Nathan imagine such reflections as these were silently operating in his favor among the best people to compensate for the many losses. As he sat, this evening, in a musing melancholy, ruminating on the disasters of the day, he could not refrain from recalling some of its incidents. Amid bitter reminiscences, he thought of Madam Raquetaque shunning his proffered hand, as she listened in silent impatience to his compliments, and then turning eagerly to welcome the entrance of another. "She will not forgive me," he thought, "for the mistake in bidding Madam Taqueraque good morning. Well, I did not intend it, but it is no matter, we will never speak again. Think of the impudence of the little Slapdash congratulating me; so delightful, charming, so strange; interesting to have a pauper-boy on her list, begging me to call often; such an attraction to her saloons, equal to a Brahmin or Brazilian prince. Yes! Madam, when I exhibit, it will be with the Wandering Minstrels or at the Museum; no engagement at private houses with my name to grace the choice collection of monstrosities; and so farewell to your menagerie, as I told her in words more plain than polished.

"It was kind in young Mrs. Walters hoping to see more of me, 'since giving up gambling.' She must have believed that nonsense, being evidently delighted to find it a false report. Thank you, fair lady; I will remember thee. The fat, fusty Mrs. Macaroon, too, that vulgar wife of the rich button-maker, insultingly turned her back, with the little daughters in tears at her rudeness. Maybe, mother-of-pearl, you may live to repent. And Sally Demors, too, was as cold as a tombstone! Jelly Demors, as Walter named her, is in a



mood hymeneal with household thoughts, intent on Harry Dace. If a few words can poison liking, this holiday will not make her a Dacean mother."

---

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

FOR many weeks after his discomfiture, Nathan felt keenly the slights put upon him by his lady friends. In truth he brooded over his wrongs much more than was prudent. He ought to have remembered that feeding the brain continually with one idea will produce mental indigestion, an unhealthy understanding. But all his hours, withdrawn from business, were given to the contemplation of this disagreeable subject, until his well balanced judgment lost somewhat its equilibrium. Having met with this severe reverse, good sense would dictate, leaving to time to repair the injury, and to the natural current of events to bear him on once more into favor. Instead of this course, which, under any other misfortune felt less acutely, would have been adopted, he rashly resolved on controlling events by making them bend to his will. He intended, in the future, to take the initiative, to become an actor, where wisdom would have suggested his being a passive spectator.

There is a subtle essence in human vitality which is the mainspring of our conduct. It belongs, in part, to physical and in part to mental organization, but it is equally affected by a moral or bodily shock, sufficiently strong to derange its functions. Whether it come from treachery in a friend or a gunshot wound, from ill-health or sudden reverse in busi-



ness affairs, from an unexpected calamity, in love, in affection, in ambition, inordinate hate, or in any other leading passion, let it only jar this sensitive mechanism, and the former smooth exercise of volition, of free agency, becomes unhinged. Medical lore may call it a malady, but another well versed in nature's mysteries alludes to it as the mind diseased, past the medicament of drugs. Be it what it may, the unhappy victim is alone conscious of the change in its full extent, while unable to check its deleterious action. Change of scene or of seasons may, in time, restore intellectual vigor, but many fail of relief, and grope their way through life to a grave of obscurity, where they at last find repose.

Nathan, stung to the quick by the contemptuous reception where formerly a favorite, felt resolved on some retributive conduct by which his own self-respect would be regained. His attentions scorned, excited him to wage a rivalry, and in it to find his revenge. He would give up all society for the present. He would bend all the energies of the brain and of body to his profession, to rise superior and supreme to its highest distinctions. He would concentrate his talents for business in realizing splendid financial schemes, to be crowned with riches. Thus with wealth, with forensic and legal renown, with all the resources of taste, of literature, of personal gifts, he could ignore or look down upon those who now spurned him from their doors. He would create a new circle consecrated to all that was illustrious in human excellence. He would do honor to those eminent in science by throwing around them the enticing allurements and softening refinements of bewitching art; all that was grand and ennobling in knowledge should be found mingling in happy intercourse with beauty, with wit, with those feminine enchantments



born of the captivating intellect and entrancing loveliness. All should be appropriately combined amid those appliances of luxury, of voluptuous existence, amid music, the mazes of the giddy dance, sculpture, conservatories, paintings, perfumes of roses, fountains, with rich fabrics from eastern looms, in high halls of dazzling light and rare banquets.

He would do more to accomplish this great end. Prompted by the purest ambition, he would choose one who would adorn his existence, to add lustre to the sphere in which she moved. He would no longer remain alone, but unite himself with one in every aspect worthy of him and her high destiny. He reproached himself bitterly for not thinking of this before; it was almost remorse with which he arraigned his past remissness. As he recalled the many and varied mental and personal attractions of Claudia, he felt she was in all respects his equal; that he most ardently loved, too, where heretofore with folly he believed it was only appreciating admiration. This delightful feeling was the dawn of a new morning upon his clouded future, in which he revelled in the golden light, to bathe his soul in the beams of her beautiful eyes, to drink in her honeyed words that had fallen from her lips, pure as the mountain dew at daybreak. Even her pallid countenance no longer was a demerit, for he remembered at times, when warmed to animation in tender communion with him, or glowing from his embrace in the exciting waltz, the forehead and cheek lost for a moment their pallor, while a roseate hue, stealing over those classic features, suffused her face with more than mortal sweetness.

Full of this thought, intoxicated with the rapture which it diffused over his whole frame, he forgot his former high resolves, and, lover-like, in the spring-tide of his passion would now have bartered fame, and wealth, and worldly pursuits, for



some sequestered cottage far from social ties to be with her, with her alone and love. Visions of coming happiness floated through his heated fancy, until he could see in the far distant vista of the future a life of usefulness, of honor, of enjoyment, and of splendor. His memory would recall him at frequent intervals to these day-dreams of Claudia, with the delight a lover feels, devoid of corroding jealousy and heart-breaking doubts. She would be all his own, and yet when most his own, he would bestow her to the world to claim their admiration, to do homage to her as their lovely suzerain in her transcendent court of soul-subduing attractions.

Thus enraptured with the theme, and with sweet sensations of the tender passion, it was not many days before he sought the house of Claudia to tell her of the change which had come upon him, to take counsel of their mutual joys, and speak of that bliss in store for them through their life strewn with roses on their path. It was late in the evening when the door of her home was opened for him to enter, where the dim soft glow in the hall and in the parlors beyond revealed a good omen of no untimely guests. Passing on through these luxurious drawing-rooms, he gave one hasty glance at the fatal picture, where, in the mellow but uncertain light, the wounded warrior seemed to express a laughing agony in his rage and despair, causing Nathan to start in horror, as if the old officer had come forth in mortal life to scowl upon him from within the wall for his daring assurance.

Hastily he hurried on to dispel the horrible hallucination, as he entered the boudoir and music-room of his beloved lady. She was seated alone in one of those inanimate moods too often coming over her, when her Grecian figure, exquisite in form as some masterpiece sculptured from Parian stone, drooped in sadness; but her features, with the hue of



marble, intensely white, marred all the beauty which nature had lavishly bestowed upon her person. Her eyes expressed no fire nor inward emotion, when, with a slight gesture acknowledging his presence, she indicated a seat for him. Nathan was, however, too much absorbed in his own thoughts and purposes to closely scrutinize the vein in which he found the fair Claudia, or scan the expression upon her classic brow. He poured forth in a torrent of ardent eloquence his long pent-up passion; he portrayed in strains of softness, with burning fervor, the feelings her many fascinations had inspired within his bosom; he dwelt no less upon the devotion always her due when they, linked in mutual love, together should share their lives and happiness in common. Kneeling at her feet, he seized her listless hand to kiss it with ardor, to breathe those vows of constancy, of love, which rise readily to the lips of one so gifted. But the delicate fingers grew chill in his grasp, and their icy coldness thrilled through his veins. He slowly raised his eyes to look upon her face—when, suddenly springing to his feet, something like a suppressed cry of horror died away on his tongue and, aghast for an instant, he rushed bewildered, unconscious from her presence.

The enraged lady could feel the scorn that mantled her brow and flashed its fire from her eye. The insult quivered through her limbs; a maddening despair at the proposed degradation with him, the base boy-pauper, sank the nails of her clinched fingers into her yielding palms; her feet involuntarily crushed with an iron tread the pliant carpet; her mouth filled with blood from her tongue, and her teeth grated in her rigid jaws; words would not convey her detestation of the proposal; she knew she expressed her inmost soul in an eloquence more powerful than language; she knew



the paroxysm of hate upon her mind found an utterance more marked, more truthful, than in the faculty of speech; she did not spurn him with her foot, but with her whole being of spirit and body. She could extinguish him on the spot, but paused for the satisfaction of blasting him for years under her withering rebuke in silent loathing.

She strode through the vacant rooms like some frenzied fury revelling in all the wantonness of vengeance. She sat upon an ottoman to concentrate her thoughts into a maddening climax of passion, but in the effort her physical strength failed, when she sank in a swoon prostrate to the floor, with her luxuriant hair flowing dishevelled over her alabaster neck and forehead. For hours she remained in this posture, with quivering limbs alone indicative of the scathing volcano upheaving in her burning bosom. When the servants entered to extinguish the lights, she haughtily waved them from her, and sought her dressing apartment unaided. Dismissing her waiting-maid, who had affectionately offered her services, she sat alone in her ample chair, with one foot resting on a floor-cushion.

Slowly she removed her gaiters, and, with her fingers on the clasp of a stocking above her knee, she felt a languor come suddenly upon her, terminating in a dreamy heaviness, with closing of her long eyelashes in a pleasant sleep. Sleep, lady, sleep! if this be victory! Sleep, lady, sleep! if thy duty be done! Sleep, lady! if love be not a pearl ever too precious to be scorned! Sleep, lady, sleep! love's incense is holy, however humble the flame.

Remember in thy fitful slumber that in times long past, even before the inexorable avenger Nemesis was invoked by man to punish the unjust, in the primæval days of Saturn, earth-born, in the golden age of young Pan, mountain-



nursed, when the lesser deities were unknown to an infant, innocent world, the altars of Venus alone smoked with offerings. Then were the sacred fires guarded by that old progenitor of the gods, the first, the grim Anteros, the scourge of love's slighted sacrifice. Rest, lady, rest! the temples of Paphos are destroyed, the lambent flame extinguished. From the smouldering ashes no punishment may be thine. What though nature was transformed to the ideal, though affections received an apotheosis, yet thy crime against womanhood, against the soft sensibilities of thy gentle sex, against the great primitive law engraved on the heart's tablet, thy wanton wrong to pure love unfortunate, may for once escape its penalties.

Claudia sleeps—a broken sleep pillowed on the deep throbbings of her unquiet bosom, hushed by the inward lullaby of her slowly subsiding nerves. Her closing memory throws a last lingering look back upon the events of the day, as her senses glide into the land of dreams—that happy land, where, under another influence, life clothes itself in a summer sunset of Elysian purity to tinge its emotions with golden colors, so that for fleeting hours the soul may assert its supremacy in subduing tenderness over mortals. In the soothing twilight of its phantom scenes the spirits of many flit by to weep, or to rejoice with each changing mood through the changes of the night. Nathan, too, comes again to kneel once more before her.

His silent attitude implores her pity; his tears from eyes so beautiful fall thick upon his radiant cheeks; the agony of woe upon his shining brow reveals despair within. Yet he is resplendent with beams, and breathes an atmosphere of love, enticing her within its seductive zone. Why does he weep, knowing her heart has entered his? Why despair while she



endeavors to tell him he is beloved? She is growing cold in her body, her limbs are turning to stone, and it is for this he weeps, for this so wretched. Yes, his tears trickle down upon her fingers, his hand is upon her knee, as he stoops to kiss it, to bring back the warm life-blood with his burning lips. But it is too late. He chafes her arms, her neck, her bosom, in vain with his hands, his cheek, his breath; he presses his sweet mouth to hers in ecstasy, but all too late. She is no longer robed, no longer mortal, but nude marble, grieving to see herself a second Niobe. Now she is petrified to solid rock, now congealed to Arctic ice, and in her freezing torture, Claudia awakes.

She awakes to find her night-dress fallen from her shoulders below her waist, and her knees uncovered; she awakes to realize that, in her intoxicating, delicious dream, the cold air of the room has chilled her to the heart: threatening in its consequences some serious affection. Creeping by the dim light to her luxurious bed-room, she threw herself into the inviting couch, and while her flesh shivered, she laughed to think the sweet maiden might be slightly in love.

With morning came the doctor. The excitement had brought on fever, and Claudia's mother was summoned to her bedside long before day. Servants were called in attendance, for she was delirious in her mind, stange and extravagant in her words. The curtains were drawn back to permit the morning light to enter, so that sunbeams fell upon her hand. The family physician as yet had ministered no prescription: the pulse was toning down to a healthy beat: the florid hue of her complexion was fading away to a natural tint. With a long and steady gaze he watched the changes in her countenance, as he now and then consulted her pulse with her warm hand resting in his. He had never seen feminine beauty in his long



life ever so lovely as the sick patient before him. He was expecting at each moment the rich color would vanish which thus rendered her irresistibly attractive, for her form and other personal endowments were to the utmost beautiful. But as the sunbeams slowly travelled over the bed, creeping away to illumine distant objects, and finally to quit the room, he was conscious much time had passed without any perceptible change. Her lips retained the subdued crimson shade of the delicate bud as it expands into the opening rose, while her cheeks, in the full flush of youth, were touched with the soft ruby tinge seen where the Aurora throws its bright rays upon snow.

“Madam,” said the old gentleman, turning to address the mother, “the pulse is regular, the breathing quiet; all danger, in fact, all unpleasant symptoms are gone. Your daughter needs no medicines, for she is well—perhaps weak, that is all. And now, my child,” caressing Claudia’s hand, “I must steal a kiss for my fee, while I congratulate you on the recovery of color—all that was wanting to make you adorable.” As the doctor took his leave, he remarked in a low tone to her parent: “She has experienced some unusual excitement, but it has affected her system for the better; her health is, I trust, restored.”

“Mother,” asked Claudia, when they were alone, “have you ever had the measles?”

“Yes, daughter.”

“How often, mother mine?”

“Once only.”

“Have you ever been in love?”

“What a strange inquiry!”

“Tell me how often, mother?”

“Why do you wish to know?”



"I am sure I can never love again, for I love him too devotedly ever to change."

"My daughter, you are still delirious; of whom are you speaking?"

"Of Mr. Trenk, to be sure. Do you approve of my affections running away with me?"

"We will see, my child, when you are better. But has he made proposals?"

"Yes, ma'am, he has; and I, like a goose, put up my lips and pouted; not that geese, the sensible bipeds, can pout or are furnished with lips to behave so silly. But Madam *Mère*, Miss Propriety, *in propria persona*, your own dear daughter, I am afraid, did worse. She was rude and might have rejected him if she had not lost her tongue along with her prudence."

"He has no fortune, Claudia."

"He can make one."

"He has no name."

"He can make one."

"No position in society."

"He can make one."

"I am afraid your choice is not judicious. But why were you uncivil?"

"Oh, the old story, mother. I was in one of my desponding moods, when you know I am wretched about this Witch-of-Endor-face of mine, the color of wrapping-paper. I was in misanthropic reflections, a sort of Lady Macbeth, with similar benevolent intentions to murder some one, when Mr. Trenk, just discarded everywhere, came in to offer his poor name and poverty to me."

"He is to be pitied but not despised for his misfortunes."

"Well, no matter for that. I gave him a look which sent



him into the street, while it left me alone to my heavenly meditations. At first, I was in a rage at his audacity; next, ashamed of my cruel behavior; then followed some pity, then former admiration: perhaps I dreamed the rest. But now I must retrieve my error and receive him hereafter in all kindness."

"He may not return, my daughter; an insult from a lady is seldom forgiven; above all, by one so sensitive as he is."

"Never mind, mother; you know, if you will pardon me, the common adage, 'an old coal is easily kindled.'"

"Not if it be anthracite. Remember he has received a high polish—not susceptible by the specimen of fuel mentioned in your proverbial philosophy."

Claudia did not prolong the discussion. Her mind was already revelling in the realms of fancy and future bliss with Nathan. She did not believe him poor, nor the former inmate of the Asylum. What if his birth were a mystery, it was surely not low, vile, or indigent? She knew better, as all ladies know facts always are, as they wish them to be when they are in love. Nathan could and would explain at the proper time. Immediately she constructed in her imagination a brown-stone palace in Belisarius Row, which she peopled without the help of the Emigrant Aid Society. Her drawing-room was resplendent with toilets such as the world of fashion never equalled; her evenings were reunions of beauty, of refinement, of renown; her banquets were voluptuous repasts, unlike those she shuddered to think of, which the vulgar rich deemed inimitable.

While she is selecting draperies, mirrors, marbles, works of masters, flowers, music, moonlight illusions, and a thousand things more, known among feminine primary virtues, it may be as well to observe how her musings resembled those of



Nathan, when he was, in despite of the warning in the nursery tale, counting his brood before the incubation had supervened. It would be improper, in such choice society, to allude to an apophthegm in terms less select. Indeed, the intrusion of infants and infant story-books into parlors is strictly forbidden at all times. Children in arms are not admissible according to the bills of the play. But, as Nathan was not afflicted with a half-dozen of nurses and *bonnes* when teething, his cloth-covered primers came long after the croup; hence the quotation from literature for babies, "which no choice library will be without."

There was abundance of time, however, for Claudia to perfect her household arrangements before she could be united to Mr. Trenk. The mother had resolved on a trip to Europe with her in the spring, perhaps a prolonged sojourn in Italy and Paris. It would be delightful in foreign capitals to arrange her future plans for domestic comfort. A year or two was not much time lost when so many preliminaries had to be adjusted, so many details perfected. Indeed, the formal engagement need not take place till after a score or two perhaps of innocent flirtations and unexceptionable proposals had matured her innocent affections in the virtuous atmosphere of continental modesty.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE great change which had taken place in Claudia's complexion was soon the subject of general remark. Her friends observed with pleasure that not only her countenance, but her conversation, her flow of spirits, had been equally affected for the better. At first the impression prevailed she had resorted to artificial means to heighten, or, in truth, to create color. But when it became well known some physical cause alone had produced this pleasing result, her beauty was the theme of much congratulation. The season, to be sure, was well over; but still her occasional appearance in public was enough to fix attention along with the unbounded compliments of gentlemen. Well might they now be found at her feet. Helen Nevil's portrait of her at the Slapdash sensation was correct. Her moral culture, generous heart, feminine tastes, and fine sensibility were some of her virtues; while in her beautiful figure, tall, of an exquisite shape, graceful as a fawn, with features classic and faultless, she was without a blemish for the criticism of a cynic.

Claudia was now in her proper position in society. Courted and caressed on all sides, she received attentions with that winning ease of manner so natural, indeed, that it seemed she was grateful to every one for the compliments bestowed, and yet without indicating a preference for any of her admirers in particular. All were gratified with her favorable reception of them and of their pretty speeches: for she knew how to appreciate, or rather how to feign appreciation of the many pretty speeches made. In dispensing her smiles she appeared to act on a benevolent impulse alone, with a careless ease which in its effect, however, embraced even the most



humble of her friends. No one could say his devotions had not been acceptable to her, nor yet could he flatter himself he was the brightest beam in the atmosphere of her sunshine.

But she looked in vain through the crowded saloons for the once familiar face of Mr. Trenk. Where he had been the most constant in his attendance, now he was no longer to be seen. His absence might perhaps have been felt by many whose entertainments were insipid at times without him, but no regrets were expressed, nor was his name mentioned. He had quitted society. If he visited at all, it was but seldom, and then only in a few families for the most part where, on quiet evenings, he was not likely to meet the more ambitious and dissipated of his former set. A movement had been made at one time to reverse his outlawry, to recall him from the Ukraine, but it was discovered his feelings of silent dislike to the whole circle would not respond to their merciful leniency with any sentiments of gratitude. One lady indirectly opened negotiations, but he had not deigned even a verbal answer.

Claudia flattered herself that she was the cause of his seclusion from his former sources of pleasure. She imagined him brooding over his unhappy love in solitude, without any solace, refusing to be comforted by any of the usual remedies for the rejected. Although she wished to see him, perhaps comfort him in his pain, yet still she felt a feminine satisfaction in knowing he was afflicted at heart on her account. She only hoped it was a severe affliction, from which no sudden recovery was anticipated until she administered the soothing medicaments. Moreover, what did he think of her intended trip to Europe? This would surely be sad news to him, which she must in some way smoothe down, so as not to



leave him without hope. She would soon return—perhaps permit him to write to her during her travels. It would be in bad taste to go abroad having it said she was engaged. Good gracious! Such a rumor even would find its way to Paris as surely as if printed in a passport. That would be a serious calamity, too serious to be endured. So, Mr. Trenk, you can wait a little longer for the happiness in store for you. Some pretty little appropriate song will cheer him up at the next meeting. He is fond of Moore's melodies. Let it be, "Go where glory waits thee, but while fame elates thee, still remember me;" or "They say that absence conquers love, but I believe it not;" or how would it do to sing "East, west, I care not whither, so thou art safe, and I with thee." Yes, it must be done, and it will all be made up before leave-taking. He can bid farewell on the steamer, so as to avoid any unpleasant scene in private theatricals. Why would the exalted Claudia thus torment her poor lover, Nathan? But first answer why do children torture pet-puppies?

But if Nathan had given up society, how was she to meet him at all? Mr. Burk might give her some useful information on that point. But then, again, Morton was now so seldom seen in company. True, Mr. Parker would serve her purpose quite as well, and he was always with Emma Gray. It was said Mr. Sabina was an intimate friend of Nathan; but she disliked the hidalgo. She could not tell the cause, but a something was about his eye which indeed made her shudder. After all she must hunt up Emma, to rely upon her true lover for Trenk's whereabouts. But Oh, to think if Walter only dreamed of her object, would he not be most unmerciful upon her; would he not coin unheard of stories to tease and alarm her?



Claudia, however, looked in vain that evening for Emma, who was so frequently to be met. For now she was at home, shut up with a bronchial affection, to keep her secluded for a week. She was not devising plans to render a lover miserable, but on the contrary, was innocent and happy in the thought she was beloved, and reciprocated the affection with her whole heart. Although Emma was suffering from her throat, still she was in good spirits, almost joyous in her feelings, having now so much pleasure in anticipation ; and, moreover, the faithful Rosey was with her as her nurse, to comfort and to talk of her parents. In return, Emma told her of Morton's compliments on her toilet, and how she mystified him about Mrs. Santa Claus bringing all the dresses, jewelry, and other articles.

"Rosey, how do you relish being called the wife of Santa Claus?"

The nurse only smiled by way of answer.

"But then I told him of your bonnet, which I magnified into a perfect fright."

"But, Emma, how could you?"

"Only for the fun of it. He knew it was a jest. But seriously, Rosey, I don't think you wear a very becoming bonnet."

"Did you tell Mr. Burk where the fine clothes came from?"

"He must have known they were Mamma's, or he would have made me tell. Is it not strange he is my nearest relative, and yet only a distant cousin. But he loves me like a brother. He is so kind, considerate, careful of me, and so much pleased with Walter's attentions, for he told me so."

Thus with her cheerful conversation, Emma brought smiles into the face of the true-hearted woman, until she induced



Rosey in return to talk of the past. By some close, searching inquiries, Emma prevailed on her to explain the reason of her absence at the death of her mother. But the facts Rosey mentioned were evidently stated with reluctance, as though it were a theme on which she did not desire to be questioned too closely.

According to her account, however, it seems Rosey, at the instance of Mr. Gray, had purchased a few acres of ground in the suburb of Brooklyn, for which investment he had loaned her a fund of two thousand dollars. She was in hopes of being married to a young man named Gottlieb, who was expected soon from Germany. They were to live on the property when he arrived, to cultivate a market garden.

This was the substance of her excuses. But she might have added, that another nurse had been procured for Emma's mother while Rosey was in the country. The death of Mr. Gray was unknown to her until she read the melancholy news in the papers, along with the severe reproaches upon his character in the transactions about the bonds with Chester. At the same time she learned from a German butcher that Mrs. Gray and the infant were both dead, with the sheriff in possession of the house and property.

With all haste Rosey returned to the city; but on inquiry at her late home, she found it occupied by an officer of the law, who was too much engrossed with his business to give her any information. A neighboring servant-woman, however, imparted to her the confirmation of the distressing intelligence. She said that it was well known the nurse had gone away and the child was dead. Rosey, therefore, gave up all further search, to return to her little property to await the arrival of her betrothed. But with the next European mail she received letters informing her that young Gottlieb



before he could leave for America, was drafted into the army, to sicken within a few months, and had died in hospital. Thereupon she returned to the city to live, to offer her services to ladies as a clear-starcher.

She did not wish, perhaps, to tell all the circumstances attending the death of Mr. Gray, as it was evident from her manner she still believed he was imprisoned for a crime which consigned his name to infamy, and that the stigma had never been effaced since his death. She gave no explanation of the acres purchased for a market garden, nor any account of the money loaned to her by Mr. Gray. In truth the property was soon absorbed within the limits of the city of Brooklyn, to be cut up into lots. And after twelve years' possession, she sold it at a most astonishing advance on the original cost. In the meantime she made investments in houses on the street where she now lived, and experienced the beneficial effects of a similar rise in the value of her tenements.

Emma wished to ask her many questions about her lover, about the market garden, and about her mode of living subsequent to her return to the city. But Rosey was oppressed with a load of sad reminiscences, and begged her not to inquire further on these subjects. The conversation ended as it always had heretofore on this topic, by Rosey experiencing a return of the utmost grief and self-reproach in leaving Emma for so many years without her care and protection.

While Emma was thus engaged in her own affairs, which were now in such a pleasing, prosperous train, it is not to be supposed she was very watchful of the conduct of her friend Claudia. Nor was Morton Burk especially interested in the movements of one whom he seldom met except in company. Morton had his own love troubles to occupy his time with



the Rose-Bud, in the Bowery, where he was to be found nightly, unless the gallant Major Waywode was with her at some of the usual places of amusement. Moreover, it was quite fortunate Walter was not met when Claudia desired to learn where Nathan now wandered since her last lamentable interview with him. Fortunate, indeed, for Walter had accidentally obtained an inkling of the rejected proposals, with Claudia's rage and subsequent events, through some mutual interchange of gossip among family servants.

Claudia was, however, destined to meet her discarded lover a few weeks thereafter when least anticipating that pleasure, but when most agreeable—when it was most a surprise. The charming Mrs. Papyrus, the wife of an eminent advocate living on Strawberry Park, having learned Claudia's intention to travel abroad, gave her an invitation to a quiet dinner, to which Emma was the only additional guest. On the morning of the day designated, however, Mr. Papyrus sent a note from his office down town to his wife, informing her that he had asked two gentlemen friends to dine with him, without his being aware of the previous arrangements.

This hospitable intent of the advocate was only an additional pleasure and an additional leaf to his lady's extension-table. Claudia and Emma arrived long before the dinner-hour, for it was to be, they believed, only a private festivity. They were not aware of more company being expected, until Mr. Trenk entered the drawing-room, who was also as much surprised to meet the ladies. For Nathan's note from Mr. Papyrus wished him to meet the celebrated lawyer, Mr. Drummond, from the country, to talk over some business matters.

The meeting between Claudia and Nathan was cordial, with an interchange of those pleasing civilities which they were always accustomed to extend to each other. "I expected to



meet a gentleman to talk law," said Nathan, with his sweetest smile. "How agreeable to find my presence has been obtained under such false pretences."

"Do not flatter yourself that you were imposed upon," said the hostess, "for another gentleman is coming to whom I am afraid we will have to give you up."

"If it is a sacrifice on your part, I will rebel; I am sure Miss Emma here will join me in the revolt."

"Enlist Claudia, too," cried Emma, "if you wish for a successful resistance."

"With her aid I could conquer the world."

"He is ours to-day," said Claudia; "we shall not willingly part with him, nor without a struggle."

"Being then unanimous, let us lose no time," Nathan exclaimed; "let us commence the campaign with a waltz."

"Not before dinner," interposed the matron.

But Claudia had already acquiesced in the proposal, therefore Mrs. Papyrus opened the piano to furnish the music. While the beautiful couple were moving gracefully through the parlors, the husband and the expected guest entered. This interruption of course ended the performance, when mutual introductions took place with the learned Mr. Drummond, he looking in vain everywhere for that able counsellor who he was led to believe would be present to take part in their after-dinner consultation.

At the request of Mr. Papyrus, Claudia seated herself at the musical instrument, when, finding Nathan at her side, she turned over some music leaves slowly, and at the same time, in a low voice, sweetly remarked: "Let us forget the past, if I have your forgiveness. Come and see me. Can I say more?" Nathan replied that his immediate absence at Washington would only deprive him of the pleasure, and



Claudia, having thus smoothed over her late behavior to her own satisfaction, sang some pretty pieces with much feeling, in fine voice, having Nathan's invaluable assistance in the appropriate parts.

At dinner Mr. Drummond was not in the highest state of felicity. He felt disappointed in not meeting some distinguished lawyer who he was led to anticipate would be present. He also was vexed to observe a fine young gentleman, such as Mr. Trenk seemed to be, wasting his time and talents in the frivolous pursuit of ladies, of music, and waltzing. Why does he not turn his attention to some ennobling object? thought the rural Theban. How much better for the youth to have studied the law than spending the best years of his life in these worthless amusements—not that he ever could succeed at the bar with his feminine habits and tastes? Mr. Drummond was pleased, however, to think Claudia the most beautiful woman he had ever beheld. She appeared to him the most lovely being in the universe—one of those rare divinities that seldom vouchsafe their presence to mortals.

Lawyers are known to have inflammable materials in their composition in the region of the heart. Some of them have stood as high in the court of Cupid as at the footstool of Themis. Indeed the whole profession may be accused of some devotional rites to the blind god, however much outward demeanor may cover from observation their internal emotions. The statue of Justice may be at all times the avowed object of their adoration; but it is the other divinity of ophthalmic imperfection who is often the incentive to their ambition. A successful advocate, like an acceptable lover, must be inspired with the most tender and ardent sensibility. The transition from one character to the other is not only tempting but is equally common.



Inspired by Claudia's loveliness, Mr. Drummond, dismissing from his mind the disappointment, resolved to make at least an agreeable impression, if he had been unfortunate in finding his time thrown away. With much ease he assumed the lead in conversation. Fluent and witty, with playful sarcasm, and just enough acidity in his remarks to leaven his apparent great benevolence of heart, he could pursue a thought into laughable nonsense or trace it to an unanswerable paradox; he could assert a proposition in a terse epigram; or, if he wished to dwell upon a subject, each word conveyed some interesting or amusing thought, no less pleasing from the varied inflections of a musical voice. Whatever topic he touched upon was to leave upon it the light impress of his brilliant mind, as he passed on to something new and entertaining. Claudia was astonished at the facility with which at will he re coined words or applied them in playful defiance of dictionaries, and remodelled grammar in a manner no less grotesque. The smile elicited at each verbal novelty would be followed rapidly by another at the double sense in which it was used.

Not for an instant did the interesting lawyer compromise his dignity or self-respect in the midst of the merriment he created. Grave and sententious when indulging in the most absurd allusions, he was at the same time simple and fascinating in his intonations. When he expressed some witty thought, his words seemed to flow in a quiet current from his brain; but if there were feeling in the sentiment, it was revealed in language coming directly from his bosom. His utterance occasionally suffered for a moment from some internal impediment, which you might imagine was a corresponding emotion struggling with his tongue; sometimes it was a suppressed laugh forbidding oral expression to the ludicrous;



sometimes a tender throb vainly striving to smother its own publicity.

Hours passed in this agreeable manner were not noticed as they flew far beyond the usual time allotted to the pleasures of the table. When at length the ladies rose to quit the room, Mr. Papyrus, seconded by the gentlemen, interposed against their leaving. Nor was much entreaty requisite to induce them to remain. They were quite willing to listen to any intellectual display which the occasion might call forth. For this purpose, while they moved to a distant quarter of the apartment where some inviting seats suggested listless feminine comfort, the gentlemen resumed their conversation, with their fair company in the background, but within hearing distance.

The country lawyer, however, seemed to lose his inspiring animation with this movement. Nor could the many efforts of his host induce him to resume the lead. He was now as willing to follow as he was before to act the pioneer. The disjointed observations, however, inclined to the law subjects, with Mr. Papyrus as the principal speaker. After stating the points upon which it was important their opinions should be collated, he gave his own views with much force and brevity, but at the same time intimating great deference for any other aspects of the business that might on consultation be presented. As many of his observations were addressed particularly to Trenk, seemingly to invite his assent, Mr. Drummond permitted his expressive features to indicate a slight surprise. What, thought he, has the fashionable young gentleman to do with this matter? He can neither comprehend nor be interested in these questions, so foreign to his studies.

But when Nathan let fall some trivial comments, Mr. Drum



mond became aware that he was of the profession at least. His profound attention, thought he, is one good omen in his favor, while his casual inquiries indicated undoubtedly an understanding of the merits of the discussion. Neither the magnitude of the interests involved nor the intricate questions for solution deterred Trenk from taking a calm and clear conception of the whole matter. Not only were the principles upon which it would turn deemed unsettled, but their consideration involved an examination of the common and civil law and constitutional jurisprudence. To grapple with such gigantic obstacles might well induce the country advocate to believe beyond the legal strength of one so young, however promising his talents.

After hearing the statements of the two gentlemen, Nathan, with much modesty and with seeming reluctance, expressed his conclusions. He re-stated the facts, as if inviting them to correct any misconceptions on his part. But the mere statement in his lucid manner, in logical order, not only dispelled the mists in some places, but disposed of more than half the doubts which had been expressed. This clear conception of the case was an effort of genius in itself; but yet so simple, natural, and apparently so easy, that none but those trained to high forensic powers could appreciate its superior excellence. But when the counsellors were disposed to anticipate a certain victory, Nathan destroyed their sanguine expectations by adverting to the former rulings on the law points, or on similar which came nearest to those now to be met. He reviewed all the decisions in like cases in the highest and ultimate tribunal, giving a history of each, with its final disposition, along with the reasons upon which it was supported. On this branch of the subject the range of his intellect and memory astonished no less than it gratified the



gentlemen. It was a pleasing novelty to observe the fluency with which he spoke in conveying his thoughts in the fewest words, and how long reports in the books were condensed into a few sentences. Finally, after a full consideration of everything, he believed the business was narrowed down to two propositions, which he mentioned, and both had been decided in their favor.

“But remember,” said he, “it may be questioned if the Court will in future hold to the law as they have heretofore declared it. Their rigid adherence to precedent, which is called consistency, may induce them to persist a little longer, until the error becomes palpable ; but sooner or later common sense, or, if you choose, more enlarged views, must make them reverse. It is a singular fact that in the first decisions, when the first mistakes were made, the most able counsel in the Union conducted the arguments on both sides, with jurists on the bench unsurpassed for learning and ability. Yet in consequence of the Court being led off by discussions at the bar on imaginary cases which might happen, the law was decided to cover those that have never come up, while another class, like this of ours, has been sprung upon them that they never dreamed of, to which their decisions, if applied, would bear some resemblance to the perversion of justice and reason. We have therefore the law with us, *et preterea nihil.*”

The ladies were much interested with an exposition of learning and opinions so foreign to their accustomed topics. Claudia listened in delighted attention, well aware of the profound impression Trenk's observations produced on the gentlemen, from their respectful demeanor and from their casual remarks. She felt proud of her choice in recognising in him the qualities that make men of the highest eminence



and distinction. Her gratified feelings fed the flame of her love, until conscious her passion had become a principle in her existence as it was also an absorbing thought in mind and heart.

When Mr. Drummond was taking his leave he found an opportunity to whisper a farewell to her. "I am blessed with few of those white pebbles," said he, "with which the ancients preserved the memory of days passed happily. But this must be marked with one, if not more, for I have been enchanted with more beauty than ever entered my dreams, and by an intellectual treat seldom bestowed upon us law mortals."

Nathan escorted Emma to her home, and as the night was clear and pleasant for pedestrians, they were in no haste to end their walk. He knew of her engagement, so that he talked affectionately of Walter—the theme most acceptable to her. He dwelt upon his good feelings, his correct principles, his sense of honor, his filial devotion to his mother. He paid a just tribute to his long and tried friendship, the more remarkable as he had but few attachments. His high standard in estimating men had tinged his mind with cynicism in observing how far they fell short of it. His appreciation of female excellence had led him to place a low estimate on many of his lady acquaintances. Hence he was not much given to sentiment, supposing it would be lost upon them. He was therefore addicted to sarcastic levity, until they believed him incapable of much feeling; as if it could originate except in the deep and painful emotions of a too sensitive heart.

"But I am sorry, very sorry," said Emma, "he injured you by his thoughtless jest about Mr. Chester being at the Asylum."



"It was no injury to me," Nathan replied, with a merry laugh. "No answer is so effectual to a silly falsehood as another equally absurd."

"I am glad you think so, for I grieved much about it and about you also."

"Set your heart at rest about me. I never will disgrace myself, and my parents have not as yet."

"Then you are not unhappy?"

"I am afraid that I am. Recent events have given me a further insight into human nature, and unhappiness has come with the knowledge."

"I hope you may find your parents."

"I hope not, for I am afraid some crime required expiation, and I am the sacrifice. The sins of the father are visited on the children. Your sainted parent, now in heaven, I trust, did one great wrong in breaking the heart, in blighting the life of the old Lady Dowager. Has not some of his punishment fallen on you?"

Emma burst into tears. "I am afraid so," she cried; "but I never before thought of it. Yet it was not a crime, but only cruel conduct to her."

"No, it was not a crime degrading, a crime amenable to human penalties; but it was no less a crime, even if imperfect society, impotent civilization, could not mete out an adequate punishment. But, perhaps, what I say is painful to you?"

"Not at all; no, go on; tell me more," she replied, clinging closer to his arm.

"Let him beware who trifles with human affections; they are akin to the soul, investing perishable creatures with the ennobling emotions and attributes of immortality. The heart that is trampled upon is avenged in some way."



## CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE unhappiness of Nathan was produced by the disruption of social ties, his sources of amusement and relaxation in his idle hours. He was thrown upon himself to find comfort in solitude, or to form new habits, at the time when he most wanted the presence and inspiring influence of old friends in agreeable scenes to console him for his disasters. Whoever broods over misfortunes, real or imaginary, will soon realize enough of mental suffering to make him miserable. But Nathan's time was too much occupied at this particular period to permit many leisure moments for any desultory or selfish reflections. He was called to Washington to attend to his important cause, from which he was not released until the rising of the Court in the spring of the year.

He hastened home, only at the last instant to bid farewell again to his old friend Baron Altberg on the steamer just starting for Europe. There, also, he met Claudia for the first time since the dinner with Mr. Papyrus. She, too, was on her way to the continent. Nathan regretted her leaving without an opportunity having been afforded him to see her at least for an evening, as he had so much to say. Indeed, he added, he had been travelling all night that he might not miss a parting salutation. Much more did he express in the same strain, for he never before had been half so lavish of his compliments : nor had Claudia ever received with more pleasure his graceful assurances of regard. Nathan exerted himself to make a favorable impression, more especially as he wished to conceal all previous ignorance of her intended departure until meeting her on deck. True, he travelled all night, but it was to have a parting word with the Baron. He did not purchase his ticket with any thoughts of her flight.



He spoke of Altberg being on board, whom he extolled in flowing terms, and begged permission to present him. Claudia was delighted at the good fortune of knowing Trenk's intimate friend, and the Baron was introduced. Nathan availed himself of the first leisure moment to instruct him as to her merits, well knowing he would be charmed with her. In this he was not mistaken, for on the passage, the weather being calm, they had many hours for conversation, Nathan being their theme, especially as he was at the commencement their only common topic.

But when Nathan resumed his usual routine of life in the city, he found some days dragging heavily, to pass in disquiet if not in solitude. Through business hours scenes were now as formerly; but in the evening, up town, how different were his occupations. His lady friends were for the most part given up, while Walter, and Morton, and Sabina were not to be met with at the club or other places of common resort.

Sabina had brought trouble upon himself. He was conscious he was watched by Charles Nevil. He was afraid spies were set upon his every movement without any intermission by day or night. Open war he could meet to successfully overcome; but this secret, unrelenting pursuit wherever he went, whatever he did, might at any moment end with his assassination in the street or his drowning in the river. The wretch believed Nevil capable of his own baseness. He knew, moreover, the crime he meditated merited the most summary vengeance. For these reasons he wished to arrange his affairs to quit the city for ever.

Summer had now nearly set in, when Nathan found himself thus without either his former society or the gentlemen with whom he had been most intimate. He had neither the



desire nor energy to go to the country. The Druids had gone abroad. At Newport and other watering-places he would meet too many unpleasant people to render his visit agreeable. It was better to remain at home or pass his time on the yacht *Theodolinda*, which was put in commission for the season, with a full complement of men and stores, with every conceivable luxury to entertain even royalty, if any branch of it should desire to fare sumptuously in our waters. His partners in the craft, *Dace*, *Pactolus*, and two more, were all absent. Morton alone remained, who had an interest with him. But to be on board without company was rather too much solemn grandeur for comfort.

While sitting one evening solitary in his quiet apartments, he was agreeably surprised by an unexpected visit from *Walter Parker*. The position and mood, however, in which he found *Trenk*, no less excited his astonishment than pity for the poor fellow. All his animation was gone; his flow of convivial eloquence was hushed; his easy manners, at all times graceful and winning, were now tinged with a melancholy softness which, though pleasing, was still somewhat painful. *Walter* had not come on a visit of consolation, with well prepared phrases of condolence made up for the occasion. His object was a loving, friendly call upon *Nathan*, with a small modicum of latent curiosity to find out how he bore up under his savage rejection by *Claudia*; for the correspondence exchanged between certain kitchen cabinets had revealed to him some secrets of the higher contracting powers.

*Walter* essayed to break the spell in which his friend was bound. He alluded to every cheerful subject in which he imagined *Nathan* could be interested. He perpetrated good witticisms and plenty of bad puns; he was epigrammatic and sarcastic in turn; told two or three anecdotes, and re-



cited a parody on a new popular song. Seeing a copy of Rokeby lying on the table, he picked it up, exclaiming: "This reminds me of a gem set in the music of the serenade in Pasquale:

"Gentle heart, with plenty of tin,  
Take, oh take, the Hard-up in;  
I have wandered all the day,  
With not a dime wherewith to pay.  
Gentle heart, I am next of kin  
To a Hong-Kong China mandarin.

"Come, old fellow," he continued, tossing down the book, "no more of your moping, but give us some music if you won't talk," at the same time opening the pianoforte.

Nathan could not resist the kind intentions of his friend to dissipate his low spirits. With an effort, therefore, he assumed a more cheerful aspect, and seated himself at the instrument.

"Now, my dear sir," said he, running his fingers over the keys, "mark me now. Now will I raise the waters, as Launcelot Gobbo says in the play."

"Do it if you dare, as the maid said in defiance when wanting to be kissed."

"I will dare, then," Nathan replied, as he touched the notes to the pretty little song of "Oh leave me to my sorrow, for my heart is oppressed to-day." He sang the verses with feeling, with too much pathos for Walter to restrain his emotions. A tear started in his eye, which would have stolen to his cheek had he not checked it, as Nathan ceased with a quiet smile of triumph at Walter's discomfiture.

"Trenk, you are a humbug, a precious humbug, colossal at piling on the dismal."



"What would Mr. Parker's lady friends think if they heard of his weeping over some sentimental poetry?"

"Why did you not sing that to a certain fair nymph? It might have affected her movements, and postponed an antenuptial tour to Europe."

"What do you know of that matter?" cried Nathan, seriously, with some surprise.

"More than you imagine; the infernal babble of servants, and their—"

"Good heavens, did they see—" but checking some indiscreet revelation on his tongue, Trenk added in a lower tone, as if thinking aloud: "No, no; impossible; I will not believe it," covering his face with both hands.

"You take it too much to heart. I am truly sorry for your misfortune," Walter said, soothingly.

"Take what to heart—what misfortune?" asked Nathan, raising his head suddenly with a good-humored smile on his face.

"Your dismissal by Claudia, to be sure."

Nathan almost laughed as he replied: "Then I am indebted for your sympathy this evening—your forbearance, to my stupidity—to a kind commiseration for me, a discarded lover."

"Why, is it possible you were not rejected?"

"Be comforted, my dear friend; my troubles do not come from that source. I stand as well in her favor as I can wish; much better than I deserve if she knew all."

"It rejoices me to hear it. Then you are lucky enough to be able to speak with due humility and becoming modesty of your success."

"Sometimes I reproach myself," Nathan replied, "for not giving you more of my confidence in my personal matters, for I am gratified to think you are interested in my welfare."



But circumstances have formed my habits, especially one, which is, seldom if ever to speak of myself. While through life I have felt the deepest gratitude to you for unremitting kindness, I fear I have not repaid it in the way it deserved, by giving you a better insight into my feelings and thoughts."

"I supposed I always had your confidence."

"More than all others; yet not as much as was your right. But it was only my reluctance which restrained me."

"I was grieved to think Claudia had rejected you."

"Were I this moment in the position of an unfortunate suitor, I could not speak of it, as it would then be a confidential subject in which another is involved, for ever closing my lips. But I presume she would now trust to my discretion, although I must assure you no understanding exists between us."

"No engagement, then?"

"No engagement of any kind. My depression of spirits originated in other causes—isolation from former circles of friends, from seeing you so seldom since your happy relations with Emma, from not meeting Morton often, who unfortunately is passionately in love with the pretty Rose-Bud; while even Sabina has changed into a gloomy, selfish misanthrope. I have now no pleasant associations—thrown upon myself, to be miserable when not employed in business."

"Summer is coming on; you will then have dissipation enough."

Nathan only shook his head sorrowfully in reply.

"Try something new—new places, new people, new popularity," Walter suggested.

"I am afraid I am spoiled. Having enjoyed the best society, I cannot descend to mix with an inferior."

"Trenk, my boy, that remark would be appropriate in the mouth of a Cockney. You have seen the best society, but



not all of it in the country, nor the half of it. Besides, you have seen some of a very bad set. For, my Lord Chancellor, you are a man of an unbounded stomach for soft-soapy-iferous speeches from fair ones whose refinement is not deeper than their dry goods. And how have they served you in the hour of need? Think a moment of these hags, Slapdash, Raquetaque, Jelly Demors, old Mother of Pearl, and other crinolated witches whose illiterate minds are stuffed with dairy-maid jealousies and the petty passions of apple-women or fish-venders. Their position has thrown the fashionable cloak of sycophantic charity over their innate, uncultivated, vulgar souls. These are some 'elegant extracts' from your visiting-book of beauty in the best society. You, cannot mix with inferior people after breathing the upper air of such purity! Thank the Lord there are not many of them; but enough to taint that atmosphere of excellence, in moral, mental, social qualities, where modest, gentle, refined manners, and other pleasing accomplishments are found in perfection, and where you nibble your ambrosia and sip your nectar among the divinities."

"Those you mention are exceptions, the black sheep of the flock; nor had I much intercourse with them," Nathan replied, laughing.

"Still you had no prejudice against that kind of mutton. Therefore your taste is not as delicate, as dainty, as you would have me believe. Had they not offended by a cold cut, you would never have made an outcry about the color of the wool."

"Let us have some more, O Diogenes. I deserve it all," cried Nathan, highly amused at his friend's criticism. "But what shall I do? Where can I go?"

"You can go where is the refinement of the metropolis



mixed up with its coarseness, its intelligence, and its ignorance. You can go to the South."

"I never thought of that," said Nathan, desirous to prolong the conversation, as Walter was now in one of his communicative, colloquial moods.

"I believe you; I believe you, my boy. You know no more of Southern people than of the South pole."

"Enlighten me, then, before I undertake a voyage of discovery."

"You are the very Christopher Columbus for them, my beloved Nathan. Take the yacht and set sail; but by all means have Morton with you. His capillary attractions on brandy are prepossessing and persuasive among the young natives. Cruise along the coast till you reach the latitude of Mullen's Island, that famous summer resort for sea-bathing nymphs."

"Please repeat the name of the Island?"

"Mullen's, Mullen's Island, in one of the aristocratic States South. If your cultivation of geography did not end where that of cotton begins, you would have been better posted. That is the field worthy of your ambition. The people are wealthy, patrician, and planters. No sectional jealousy among them; for a noble bay sets up to separate conflicting interests, to keep the peace, with plenty of oysters, fish, terrapin, and water-fowl—some of the wise provisions of nature, excellent on the chafing dish, to preserve harmony in the State. The government is patriarchal; nothing plebeian in any party platform: an established religion to swear by, and a legislative representation not disturbed by census-tables, but fixed on an immutable imaginary line drawn through the oyster-beds, shad-fisheries, and feeding-grounds of wild duck. That is the demarcation, the natural division of governmental



power. The staple productions are turpentine and sweet potatoes, tobacco and turkeys, rice and roasting ears of corn at camp-meetings, Sea Island cotton and short crops, with Presidential elections."

"Happy they must be with abundance in their material comforts?"

"Very true; but their minds are as well cared for. Their schools are on the university system in magnitude, held in the open air, with Congressional professors to lecture on the science of things in general, impassioned and mournful in their instruction, with a Sorrows-of-Werter eloquence while standing amid the ruins of the constitution of a dilapidated country. The rising generation graduate on Cuba cigars made of the choice Connecticut narcotics, and on full columns of political newspapers, carefully expurgated of contemptible information on other subjects. The learning of their ripest scholars is immense. Some of their best commentaries on the Buncombe abstractions would compare favorably for profound research, luminous exposition, and explosive power, with a Leyden jar surcharged with a high Dutch six hours' lecture on German metaphysics."

"Stop a moment, Master Walter. Could you not connect that last idea in some way with telegraphing wires?"

"A vulgar suggestion, Nathan, unworthy a lofty, generous intellect. These matters have the rare merit of soaring above the useful, the practical. Plato himself, in his philosophy, is not more free from such a base imputation."

"But it must come down to a business point at last; for who pays the printing and the publishing?"

"Nobody, of course; nobody, to be sure. All done by the Government and the General Post-Office. Nathan, I am astonished at your innocence!"



"The sin of ignorance is mine, I must confess. But I care for none of these questions."

"Yes, you do, old fellow."

"Nothing whatever with abstractions in the abstract."

"But in the concrete, Nathan, with bright eyes to look upon your deeds; not title deeds on parchment, but, in tournamental parlance, your *devoirs*, lyric, achromatic, and calisthenic, with a small sprinkling of the Anacreontic."

"Now your conversation becomes interesting, sensible, Mr. Parker, with logic in that last observation. But the induction is not perfect, not persuasive. I think you mentioned something about a patrician proclivity—a slight impediment, methinks, to a *plebiscimus*."

"Rather an acclivity, no doubt, in your case; but not insurmountable. Credentials, in the Southern courts of Cupid, are not closely scanned until followed with proposals to treat. Establish a friendly footing on the first mission: easily accomplished: your impudence is wonderful. Ulterior propositions we need not discuss. Diplomacy does not deal with speculative questions."

"It is the first step wherein lies the difficulty. How am I to gain a footing at all with this the Southern nobility?"

"That depends upon whom you intend to bestow your sublime consideration. If it be the old gentlemen, your line of policy is simple. Listen respectfully to their political dogmas, and, without understanding a word, follow the illustrious example of Major Waywode—always coincide in opinion with everybody, and your popularity is certain. But if your intentions be hymeneal, with an eye to the beautiful and a heart ever open to Pactolean persuasives, then look out for the dusky ministering ayahs."

"What! The black family-servants? A novel mode for



me to adopt to ingratiate myself with respectable families."

"Listen, my son, and learn wisdom. The sable Aunt-Sallies and shining charcoal-colored Dinahs regulate household matters. If in their suspicious opinion you should be wanting in the proper aristocratic air or pedigree, the door would be shut on your indignant face with as little ceremony as on the nose of a soul-driver or abolitionist. Let them suppose you not to be 'quality,' and your hat will never hang on a peg of the inner hall. You can sleep then with the overseer of the field-hands until you depart."

"Must they be bribed?"

"Bribe one of them! You might as well beseech a Common-Council man or member of Assembly to be virtuous. The pride of family caste is too strong to be tempted. They know best with whom 'young missus ought for to 'sociate.' With great scorn and contempt for 'common white folks,' if they class you in that category, you may at once come home."

"Give me, Mr. Parker, by all means, letters of introduction, with proper credentials to them in due form. They seem to be friends of yours."

"Your own pretty baby face, green-glass breastpin, and superb wardrobe, will be sufficient recommendation. But woe unto you if they find you are the grand or great-grandson of a negro-driver, tavern-landlord, or country store-keeper. In that event your cards would never reach 'young missus,' nor your many calls be reported. Don't fall into the common error in believing the blacks are the subjected race in the South. The whites have been conquered long ago, like so many India Nabobs and Begums shut up helpless for life, dependent on the lazy caprice of their colored people for every bit of comfort or even local information."



“What valuable discoveries you have made where so much has been said and written. When is it the intention of the American Herodotus to publish? Perhaps the world has been equally misinformed about the pretensions to rank of those celebrated ‘first families’ in the planting States.”

“When you speak of their ‘pretensions,’ Nathan, you are in the twilight of ignorance. They never made pretensions to a distinguished ancestry. To be of a first family is sufficient. For what they have been they leave you to consult modern books. For their English lineage you can turn to Debrett, and trace it back to the coming in with the Conqueror. Their family records are full of old letters, which would be invaluable in disclosing the secret springs of British history. Their portrait galleries have many courtiers and courtly dames who figured in the drawing-rooms and councils of the banished or decapitated Stuarts. Their crests upon their plate and other valuables, are still worn with many proud coronets over the water, by even younger branches of their houses. Sometimes agents for a dormant peerage, or in search for the true heir in entail to an old estate, come here to ransack these musty repositories where repose important facts about the past. But our chivalry deems itself above foreign titles, and too independent to disturb their unknown namesakes in quiet possession of lands. They to dispossess some gentle people of traditional distinction at home from their old halls or manors, on the testimony of time-worn documents and tombstones! It is not honorable, it is not right, but cruel; no gentleman would be guilty of such conduct, and there is the end of it. At last Parliament, by an enactment something in the nature of a statute of limitations, has had to interpose and give legal ownership after a generation passing without a claim made by these republican cousins.”



“What do you think, yourself, my most noble Griffith, of such self-denying doctrines?”

“I must confess, Nathan, this is running their principles into the tellurian humus with a pretty deep Artesian dip. Our metropolitans of the blue blood would take a more practical and profitable view of their domestic duties in such cases to grab all they could get.”

“Their free and easy habits and customs, their aversion to social restraints, may account in part for this indifference.”

“Free and easy habits and customs among Southern patri-  
cians! Why, Trenk, of what are you dreaming? Their habits and customs are of the Sir Roger de Coverley period; their etiquette is stiff and starched, done up in shirt-frills, pomade and powder, tied in a queue with a black ribbon, in tight breeches, knee-buckles, long stockings, and shoes. Bless your infant prattle, how prettily you do talk about their free and easy way of doing things! Did you expect them to swagger and slap you on the shoulder? You must have been reading some English traveller’s account, taken from actual observation on a Mississippi flat-boat, where he had the advantage of an introduction to the family circle.”

“What choice library would you recommend, Mr. Parker, for my instruction?”

“Your whole duty of man will be found in Lord Chesterfield’s Letters to his Son, Addison’s Essays, Sir Charles Grandison, or a pocket edition of all Richardson’s novels for easy reference in emergencies. But stick to Sir Charles; that will teach you how to deflect your spinal column with dignity. But don’t forget to take Morton and the Tuscan or Tuscarora grape made into choice cognac. They will fraternize with the young *patres conscripti* able to bend the bow or elbow, and not yet quite up to Grandison and the gout. You will



of course put up at the Golden Fleece, the first hotel everywhere. The name will not be found with the mutton on the bill of fare; but look out for it in the figures on your bill of items."

---

## CHAPTER XL.

"The sea, the sea, the open sea," sang Morton Burk on a fine summer's evening, as he and Nathan Trenk, on board the Theodolinda, were bound for Mullen's Island. They were outside of Sandy Hook; it was near the hour of sunset.

"And if storms should arise to wake the deep,  
What matter, what matter, we will try a little more  
of the particular old fourth proof to keep one  
eye open while the other ocular will sleep.  
We will drink and sleep.

"Nathan, thou musical zephyr, what thinkest of that emendation, both dithyrambic and lyric sweetness long drawn out—that superhuman effort of fine frenzy and loud larynx? Nathan, thou peripatetic accordeon, who, on a long pull of the thorax, art musical, when shut up still the same; speak, speak to me, Nathan, or may the gift of song leave thee for ever!"

Not receiving a reply from his companion, again Mr. Burk broke out in deep basso:

"The winds, the winds, their revels keep.



"Now, my boy, I rather like that part of the atmospherical performance if their tippie be dozological. But I hope they will postpone 'a sound of revelry by night,' while Theodolinda is on the sea, for the yawning deep may display the jaws of death neither poetical nor pleasant on a close inspection by stars or moonlight. Nathan, once more I beseech thee, when the winds are on a bender what may be their beverage?"

"How should I know, not being a judge of liquors," was Trenk's answer, as he sat listless near the tiller, looking over the stern at the receding land.

"It is a great defect in your education, Nathan. You wish to be ranked among the solid men; I prefer the fluid. A lymphatic individual may be the one, an emphatic human must be the other; an amphibilious animal is both. Man, according to the most scientific insectologist, is gravimen-ivorous and carmen-ivorous; inclined to gravy with his solids, to grape-juice with a song; which, being demonstrated, I will take a little brandy."

Mr. Burk having suited the action to the word and the brandy to his taste, ventilated his musical voice in continuation:—

"If storms should arise and awake the deep,

What matter, we shall ride and sleep.

We shall ride and sleep,

Ride and sleep.

"Rather an uncommon equestrian achievement, Mr. Trenk, on such a large animal; holding on, I suppose, to the Spanish main for safety; the deep, no doubt, being a thoroughbred of Barbary, curried every morning with the comb of the sea; no limit to its speed or bottom on a stretch of Atlantic cable curb-chain.



"With the blue above and the blue below,  
And blue myself where the good liquors go."

Trenk sat motionless during this recitativo, watching the clouds on the horizon. But at last, amused at some fun of Morton, he said:

"It is certain melancholy will never mark you for her own."

"I believe you, Nathan; care and cognac divide the world. You know under which banner I enlist."

"Then, my gallant knight of the green seal, you will never desert your colors."

"But, my good fellow," added Morton, "I can always navigate. In proof of it, I will take an observation on the binnacle. By Jove, come here!" he exclaimed, gazing at the compass. "You are running due west, and will some time in the night pitch into the Jarseys. Hold her off shore and save a sea-bath at Barnegat."

Nathan rose to look at the instrument for a moment, then gave a glance at the bank of clouds where the sun had just gone down. Resuming his seat, with a smile he remarked:

"If we are running west the sun is setting near the north, which is a slight astrological mistake in that luminary. How do you account for it?"

"The instrument is out of order, and we will not be able to make a land-fall on Mullen's Island."

"I know the variations," Trenk remarked, "but ordered the compass to be adjusted some time ago. It was neglected by the master. Be comforted, however, we are on our proper course for the Golden Fleece."

"Your thoughts may be wool-gathering, Nathan. This heading may bring us to a fleece of Merino or Cotswold on the prairies. But I supposed you were bound south to a woolly region of another color."



No answer followed; both sat silent in that dreamy lassitude which sometimes comes over us at sea. Morton found solace in his glass of liquor, Nathan occupied himself with inspecting distant objects. Rational conversation seemed exhausted. A favorable breeze was filling their sails, while soothing the young gentlemen with its refreshing coolness. Burk felt its inspiring influence, which prompted him to dispel the monotony with something more stirring.

“Mr. Nathan Trenk,” said he at last, “please let us have the light of your countenance, the light of other days, and the language of your lips to assure us you are in the land of the living. Up with the portcullis of your fancy, and down with the drawbridge of your cogitations to admit us into the castle of your genius. Beneath the covered archway let us reach your quadrangular court-yard. Having thus thrown ourselves upon your generous hospitality, vouchsafe to confabulate. What, no response! thou responsive swell to be seen at all hours on Broadway, with diminutive shirt-collar and invisible neck-tie, willing to smile at a pretty gaiter or with any gentleman in an oyster saloon?”

“Quite a fanciful sketch, Mr. Falstaff; proceed. The rising stars are silent witness of your noble effort; they look down approvingly—that strain again.”

Burk rose from his seat to kick the camp-stool down the hatchway. Tramping round in a circle, with an occasional tripping of his heels together, he at last came to a sudden halt, and throwing himself into a stage-attitude of heroic tragedy, with right leg protruding, knee doubled, shoulders thrown back, and arms outstretched, burst forth:

“What, ho! Warder upon the watch-tower, look beyond the moat to tell me what bodes that shrill blast of bugle-note! Haste to the battlement and look forth. ’Tis Don



Alonzo bids thee. Ha, ha, who upon yonder plain is kicking up the dust and comes this way? 'Tis that false traitor, Gaspar de Baltezar, with a knightly train and imperial Princess, Mariana, on white palfrey by his side. Ha! that shrill war-blast again, the loud tramping of men-at-arms, the bright gleaming of burnished armor! Tell me not it is the express line of cars, with Drummond-light in double convex reflector. Foul coward, thou liest in thy craven throat! Double the watch upon the highest keep, close the postern, put out the pigs, call the knaves from the buttery, and within butt's-length cover the bow-men at the butrass near the outer barbican. What, ho! stolid churl; look westward to the beacon signal, the lurid smoke upon the beetling headland, which portends a host advancing. Now comes the tug of war; the battle is toward. By my halidom, Sir Warder, I will cleave thy matted skull from crown to chine if thou mutter aught of steam-tug with oyster-boat in tow. Tug me no steam-tug, or by St. Hubert I will be a Thug to purge thee of thy sins quickly in purgatory, an' thou hadst as many lives as Plutarch.

"Thrice have I sought that dastard knight in fouden field and thrice has he escaped me. On the plains of Ascalon, where Baldwin, our king, gave a joyous tournament in honor of his high emprise, I met him, *à l'outrance*, in the lists. Horse and rider went down before my battle-axe, when he sounded a parley and sent a herald to ask me what was the price of putty.

"Again when the walls were won, when the pious chivalry rushed in, pell-mell, to make captives and converts of pretty maidens, the scream of outraged innocence struck upon my ear. A lovely woman swooned in his rude, stalwart, ruffian arms. I haste me to wield the ponderous mace in rescue;



but, ere it fell, the beauteous infidel oped her smiling, Orient orbs, dazziing as the resplendent gems upon her fingers, which she waved in air, with thumb upon her nose. Thus an enchantress saved him, and she bade me seek her sister round the corner.

“Missives soon after came which impelled me homeward. Christendom had suffered a convulsion such as follows the ignoble gains of base commerce.”

“But, most puissant Don Alonzo, pardon me. Two encounters only with your deadly foe have you narrated. In what crusade along the hard road of Jordan did you meet again?”

“Well spoken, worthy Trenkulo; by'r lady, you may swear by this bottle, the question is well put. We did not join our banners thereafter at the Holy Places. My trusty squire reported a vacuum in the supply-pipe of the private exchequer. The missives aforesaid apprised me funds, like friends, were sparse. The wealthy house of Orleans sent no remittance, not a picayune, either morning, evening, or extra edition. The pious St. Louis suffered from heavy failures in protracted prayer meetings. Cairo, not worth a mummy, had gone under in a heavy liquid-ation. At Memphis, the Ibis, feathering her nest with cotton, was caught on a sand-bar. The Delta had many mouths to feed. Cleopatra's Needle could not mend matters, with some talk of a herring-bone, hem-stitch, back-acting, patent, double-trouble sewing machine, to put in a new crop of Egyptian wheat. California, the wife of Julius Cræsus, was almost in a state of repudiation. The Jews of York refused to shell out a sequin, save with a collateral mortgage on Pharaoh's linch-pins in the original Oriental Transit-line. The bankers at Rome, with a safety-fund, ceased to discount. Archimedes could not raise



a sack of salt at Syracuse. I, Don Alonzo, heart-broken and hard up, in the lurch at Aleppo in the Levant, hastily levanted. The noble family of the Medici—the apothecary princes dealing in drugs, tonics, and other toothless gums—having on their crest three bilious, golden balls with legend, ‘Two to One I take All,’ came like an uncle to my relief. Wandering homeward, I took a turn with Tancred, taught a new dodge to the old Doge, with some private lessons on a peculiar wrinkle to the free-and-easies along the Rhine.”

“Hold, Don Alonzo, while we admire the spread of intelligence by the pious soldiers of the cross.”

“Take your time, worthy Trenkulo; but I hasten on as belted knight to the gentle passage of arms holden at Bains à la Douche, in Normandy. There Gaspar de Baltezar displayed his shield in defiance against all comers. Our lances were shivered to splinters. Wheeling on his war-horse, he raised his vizor and voice, exclaiming—Why, Don Alonzo, how are you? Bless my soul, I know the family; how’s your mother? What is your private opinion of rats?”

“Very civil in him, Don Alonzo; a speech neat and appropriate; you told him, of course.”

“Enraged at his insolence, I quit the lists in a big disgust.” Again the tramp of the circle was resumed, and the interesting tragedian merged into a fanciful manager, as he paused to address an imaginary audience in the most approved foot-light style of politeness. “Ladies and gentlemen! the performance is closed for this evening, with many thanks for your munificent patronage to our humble efforts in restoring the legitimate drama to its pristine purity and present remunerating success. On to-morrow evening we will have the honor to present to you a new attraction on the French horn and Kent bugle, in a young man whose modesty com-



pels him to lisp and to put the tips of his fingers to his upper lip, with a slight, hectic cough of genuine conceit, caught in a warm concert-room from the too close juxtaposition to the breath of some enthusiastic young ladies.

“His name is Nathan Trenk, unrivalled on instruments of wind, string, Strakosch, or steam-power, with brass, mental physical and musical, silver keys and cat-gut. He sings a tolerable song when mirrors are excluded from self-admiration. His ‘Pussy Cat in the Cream Jug,’ is a milk-and-honey canan-ary bird vocalization. ‘My darling Patent-Leathers,’ peculiarly excruciating; but ‘Tie up my toe, mee aine dear Mamie,’ takes the rag off the bush.

“Young misses are not admitted without their mammas, and married ladies only with their liege lords, in consequence of the camphene, kerosene, crinoline inflammability from the combustion of a bursting moss rose-bud, which he will rashly wear in the voluptuous buttonhole of his festive, dove-colored dress-coat. Box office open at daylight till breakfast, after which hour choice tickets can be had in the city conservatories at a small advance of four hundred per cent. Two bows to the right, two bows to the left, ditto to the boxes, double to the big fiddle; one grin generally, philanthropically, picking up the bouquets, and exit.”

Hereupon Don Alonzo disappeared beneath the hatchway.

With fast sailing, in a few days they reached the inlet leading up to the island of their destination. A favorable wind wafted them over the bar to placid waters, where, after rounding to, the anchor cast, gun fired, and sails clewed up, they went on shore.

It was only a short time after their arrival they were surrounded by numerous old friends, and many more of newly



made acquaintance. Some they had met at Newport and Sharon, others in attendance in the Supreme Court at Washington, and a few had seen the old Lady Dowager's mansion on her evenings of general reception. The novel phenomenon of a sensation at a Southern watering-place was witnessed, when it was known these young gentlemen were the sublimated cream of metropolitan society, choice extracts of its wealth, fashion, aristocracy, distinction, and exclusiveness.

Morton soon took charge of the youths, conducting them on board the *Theodolinda*, to spread before them at morn, noon, at eve and night, fragrant cigars and other temptations such as are tasted only at the most sumptuous entertainments. Nathan, on the other hand, passed the time in morning lounges with the gentlemen in delightful conversation: at dinner parties, where he sometimes favored them with his seductive songs, and in the evenings with the ladies. When these ceased to be excitements, he made excursions to the yacht for them, where, assisted by Morton, all the appliances of art, luxury, and accomplishments, were added to please and fascinate.

Weeks had thus been passed in ever-diversified scenes of enjoyment before Nathan was satisfied with their daily occurrence. Satiated at last, he was content to find some relaxation and repose in comparative solitude. One evening he stole away to muse alone on the cool veranda. It was yet an early hour, the sky brilliant with stars and the summer moon. A venerable lady followed soon after, to look for her servant-man in waiting to escort her to her cottage near at hand. But the slave was not to be found. Regretting his absence, she was about returning in-doors, when Trenk offered his services to see her to her home. Thanking him



most graciously for his kindness, she called her beautiful niece, a maiden yet in her teens, and they walked forth.

These friends of Nathan need description. The old lady had never been married. Her niece was her brother's child, now an orphan from the loss of both her parents in her infancy. They were of the Strafford family, wealthy and patrician planters, rich in lands and slaves. The two maiden aunts, guardians of Francesca, were almost recluse from the world, but gentle, affectionate, and refined in their manners, devoted to the most rigorous works of benevolence and religion, until their health became impaired under the too strict observance of their ascetic duties. The child grew up without forming any congenial acquaintances, with a pious education, and her memory crammed with psalms, prayer-books, catechisms, and chapters of Scripture, so that once reading any task sufficed to remember it verbally for ever. As she grew older the parish rector, a learned but eccentric scholar, taught her the rudiments of the ancient classics.

The increasing physical infirmities of the aunts precluded their close attention to her studies, while she was permitted in consequence to pursue a desultory course of self-instruction without their assistance. Timid, modest, retiring, and taught to shun company, at twelve years of age Francesca had no resource for her active, acute mind but in reading. But she read only to occupy her time, not for improvement; she never thought of that. The old family library was voluminous though antiquated, consisting of theology and church history, the ancient classics, some modern authors, Shakspeare, Milton, Bacon, Doctor Johnson, Pope, Addison, Hallam and Rollin, with a few stray moral morphia novels of the last century. To these might be added the ponderous American Archives, with other tomes of choice political publications.



It can be well imagined how dreary to a young ardent mind must these standard works appear. But she read on, read everything, believing them the best authors extant, while blaming her own dulness in not enjoying their excellence. Her well-trained memory retained all she read; the language of the writers became her own, until her ideas and words were somewhat quaint but classic, with a singular purity and elegance of diction, with great originality and strength of thought. But the library afforded her no pleasure. She had no sympathy with the master minds with which it was peopled. Something was wanting—and in grief, in despair, she deplored her intellectual weakness; for the poor child had yet to learn the defect was not hers.

The conversation of those who visited her relatives was not more cheering, and yet her aunts seemed to be pleased with their company. Here again was another source of vexation to the orphan girl. Regretting she was not contented and gifted in talents as her good guardians, Francesca endeavored to discover why she was unlike other people, why she did not feel as they felt, why she did not enjoy their enjoyments. But it was in vain; she sat demurely at the side of her aunts, saying little, in much self-reproach, weary with herself and the whole world. It was a pleasure for her to slip away on a saddle-horse alone, and, when unseen, to ride furiously over fields, fallen logs, and fences, through ditches and open woodlands, to find exhilaration in the wild excitement; and then return quietly, unnoticed, to the secluded sitting-room to spend a silent evening.

Suitors came at last; one, said to be promised in her cradle, whose name was Pericles Jones. Their families were related; they had known each other since infancy. But this modern Pericles interested her no more than his Athenian



namesake in the library. Master Perry, as the servants on the plantation called him, was fond of dogs, horses, and guns, of which he talked too much even in the presence of Francesca. He knew he was destined to marry her, and rather thought well of the arrangement, as he was slightly in love with the pretty girl.

But when summoned to the parlor to meet him, Francesca inwardly groaned at the infliction, preferring her aunts in the silent sitting-room. She had, however, to obey; propriety required her to act as became a gentlewoman; therefore she received him, listened to his talk, entertained him in a befitting manner as due to a visitor, but rejoiced when he took his departure. She knew she did not dislike Perry, for that would have been sinful; yet she was indifferent to his society. Wherefore, she did not know; but it was, no doubt, because she was not as other and better people.

The orbit of Master Perry's revolutions round the centre of his attraction seemed at last to diminish, and his periodical returns to become more frequent. This was a grievous trial to the patience of Francesca; but it had to be borne as all things else disagreeable in this world of affliction. Once, however, when she was about taking her usual equestrian flight, he made his appearance. There was no help for it; the ride had to be given up. She went to receive him in the parlor where he was seated, his hat being placed on the centre-table.

With his usual twaddle on local topics he consumed an hour, and was then drawing near to a more tender theme, when some spirit akin to that which possessed her on horseback was awakened. For a moment her modest, shrinking timidity was gone. She sprang from her chair to hastily take up his hat, as ladies usually manipulate that article, or as man takes



hold of a bonnet. Putting it on his head, and pushing down the crown, she exclaimed: "Perry, you are tedious, over-much; you do not converse prettily—at least, such is my opinion. When you depart, do not return on my account; and as you have your hat on, I will not trouble you to remove it before going." Patting the hat on his head with her hand: "There, now, that will do; with many remembrances to your mamma."

Master Perry went off at a tangent in sad tribulation to tell everybody how he had been "flung over" by that queer girl.

Another came, much the senior of Master Perry, but purseproud and stupid company for a young lady of her wit. His topics of conversation ran in the bucolic measure, about the number of bales of cotton made by his neighbors to each field-hand, and the bushels of corn to the acre, with comparative statements of the relative value of horses, mules, and oxen. He was not averse to the sale of a fine negro, if a good price were given, and could expatiate on the requisite qualities in an excellent overseer of slaves. Poor Francesca was in despair with his visits, until the servants in the kitchen, some twenty or more, apprehensive his attentions were too marked, soon foiled his purpose by the usual Ethiopian tactics, which left him in doubt whether they alone were responsible for much disrespectful treatment.

The ladies were now at their summer cottage on the seashore, where Francesca was nearly as secluded as at her plantation home, without even the favorite horses for her daily exercise. The infirmities of her aunts increasing, seldom permitted them to go abroad except for a few moments in the twilight. They did not desire Francesca to join in the dance, and therefore she was seldom seen in the ball-room.



She was in another part of the building when her aunt accepted the polite offer of Mr. Trenk.

"I am afraid, sir," said the venerable lady, "we are depriving you of a fascinating pleasure in taking you away from this gay scene."

"A walk, madam, on such a lovely eve as this is preferable to a crowded hall. Dissipation sometimes loses its charm, even as books or other study when perused without relaxation."

"Perhaps you are not fond of literature?"

"Pardon me, madam, I am something of a plodding bookworm, when in the mood; but it is only by mixing much in the world I learn to appreciate books."

"A life of a recluse, with plenty to read, must be delightful."

"Yes, madam, I agree with you, it is delightful when tired of the external world."

"Young people who have never been from home will read. Would you put an interdict on their inclinations?"

"Not if they desired to read."

They had now reached the cottage, when the aunt entering, Francesca and Nathan seated themselves on the veranda to enjoy the cool breeze from the water. This was an unexpected good fortune for him thus to be left alone for a pleasant hour with one whom heretofore on a slight acquaintance he had thought beautiful. But her shrinking deportment caused him for the most part to lose sight of her, to exchange only the common salutations when meeting.

This evening, however, he observed her with more scrutiny. She was tall, well formed, with delicate Grecian features, clear complexion, dark hazel eyes, and raven-black hair. But it was in the quiet innocence and purity of her



heart, which every intellectual lineament of her blushing countenance portrayed, that was her greatest fascination. Her mouth and teeth were lovely; but, above all, her smile, once witnessed, was joyous in the play of her features, indescribably attractive and pleasing.

Francesca, to his surprise, was the first to resume the conversation. "You left my aunt under the impression you were not an advocate for much reading. Is it not profitable?"

"That depends upon what is read, and the purpose."

"It is somewhat unusual to hear books spoken of in disparagement."

"They must be used sparingly, properly, knowingly, or else they are not beneficial, especially to the young."

"How strange! Such opinions from you who, they say, have read everything!"

"Thank you, fair lady; you are very kind. But let me assure you I have not self-inflicted such a calamity. Too many books take the marrow from the brain, to leave only dulness behind."

The lady was amused at this novel thought, when he hastily added: "Do not smile at the observation, for it is true. Homer sometimes nods, Shakspeare now and then is drowsy, and a famous English historian has insinuated that *Paradise Lost* will put you to sleep. In the name of Morpheus, how then can they at all times be improving? I speak knowingly, having read them. Study them, and you will agree with me."

"Although you are jesting, sir, I must assure you I have read them over and over again."

"Why read them more than once?"

"I had nothing but old authors at my command."



"Then, my fair lady, you can confirm the justice of my criticism."

"I wish I knew if you speak seriously, for I am confused in hearing such an opinion, at variance with all I have heretofore been taught."

"Taught by others, no doubt; not your own judgment surely. Turn over a new leaf in life's experience where you may learn a new lesson. Few, very few, resort to old authors for amusement. Therefore they all read slowly, sparingly, without any apprehensions of punishment for literary dissipation. They are read with a different object in view. It is no laughing matter, we all know."

If Francesca was surprised and delighted with him, he was no less with her ingenuous frankness and appreciative discrimination. Time went by on rapid wing, as they conversed, heedless of its flight: both charmed with each other in the interchange of thoughts and emotions such as neither had before experienced.

That night Nathan went on board the yacht, but he did not soon retire to rest. He found Morton alone on deck with his German pipe to assist his meditations. Trenk ordered some Burgundy punch, and, while lounging on a coil of rope, told Morton of Francesca. The pleasing picture was not overdrawn; but it was too life-like to escape Burk's perception of the beautiful in mind, in heart, and form. To him the description was a choice specimen of Nathan's entrancing eloquence. He desired an opportunity to know more intimately the divinity of its inspiration



## CHAPTER XLI.

HOWEVER charmed Mr. Trenk may have found himself for several weeks with Francesca; however much amused and delighted she may have been with the humor and kindness as well as the other good traits of Mr. Burk; still a change in the tide of events put a sudden check upon their felicity. When Francesca was most fond of the society of Nathan, and was with him for hours each day, and when he seemed to be only happy and contented at her side, some news came to him from New York to disturb the equanimity of his mind as well as to control his future movements.

When he quitted the city his business speculations were in a prosperous condition; no cloud upon the financial horizon indicative of a coming storm. Never were bankers more sanguine of the future or less uneasy about the present. At the largest institution a day had passed without any one soliciting a loan, an event unparalleled in commercial annals. But now rumors came fast and thick which foretold a fearful change—a change fraught with tempests and ruin to many. Unprepared for such a calamity, Nathan hastened home. He returned only to find his worst anticipations fully realized.

The dreams of fabulous wealth that had floated through his disturbed mind when brooding over his harsh treatment by his fashionable lady friends, he had endeavored to coin into dollars by some speculative combinations on the stock exchange. The attempt would have been a folly in the most propitious times; but now it was, as the event proved, madness. He was met with a demand for an instant payment for heavy advances on securities, or, as an alternative, their



immediate sacrifice in a market which was rapidly falling and spreading disaster among thousands.

When appealing to wealthy friends to aid him in his need, he found them unhappily in the same dilemma. On whatsoever side he turned for relief, he met persons in the same pursuit, who, unsuccessful as himself, were only adding fuel to the flame of excitement to feed the panic which had seized upon all. Desperate and goaded to frenzy by the ruin menacing him if unable to redeem his securities held by bankers, he was willing to resort to almost any expedient to obtain relief. Yet he was amazed at himself in finding how his principles of honor and honesty had relaxed under the intense pressure for self-preservation.

It was not long before his evil genius tempted him in the most enticing form. When he recalled to mind all of his acquaintance who might have funds at their disposal, he had, somehow, overlooked his idle, careless, and somewhat pious friend, Señor Sabina. Who more likely than he to have money in bank? Who less addicted to speculations of all kinds? Who would be more willing to come to his aid, provided, always, he was not ultimately to lose by the operation?

Nathan lost no time in seeking Sabina, while reproaching himself for so many weeks lost already in forgetting he had such a friend in reserve. But while approaching the rooms of Don Nicolas, much trepidation was in the nerves of Trenk, with some rising of a phlegm in his throat, with sickening apprehension that he, too, in his selfishness, might refuse his assistance. But he was not at home. He had gone with his aunt and Mrs. Chilton to attend a midday prayer meeting held at noon in the spacious basement floor of a Wall street bank. This religious gathering had been



“inaugurated” under the auspices of the Reverend Mr. Mellowtone and Doctor Brimson, to be highly instrumental in opening the eyes of many sinners to the error of their ways since they had lost their money. An ex-official of the Stock Board gave out the Psalms ; an auctioneer, forgetful of notarial protests, read calmly chapters of Scripture ; and a street-broker held forth in exhortation with as much eloquence as formerly when in his late employment on the kerbstone.

Again Nathan called at an earlier hour, when Sabina was fortunately found and apparently well pleased with his visit. When Nathan stated the embarrassed condition of his affairs, entering into a minute detail of the transactions, Sabina seemed, much to his surprise, to comprehend fully the difficulties with which he was beset.

Don Nicolas was equally frank. He admitted he was in funds from his recent sales of property preparatory to closing all his business in this country. He had disposed of much of his estate in the city, and wished he were rid of all of it. But he did not now desire to enter into any new transactions. Yet he could not refuse to assist Mr. Trenk. But while he looked for no profit to be made out of the affair, it would only be entered into on the most positive certainty that neither risk nor trouble would come of it. What, therefore, had Nathan to propose ?

To this inquiry, Trenk suggested he would place in his hands some securities in corporation bonds that he held, and ample to cover any loan made. Sabina, however, doubted whether they would not suffer depreciation in the general crash, and eventually prove worthless. Nathan was now at a loss for other means to satisfy Sabina's timidity, while it seemed he was willing most generously to aid without any profit to himself. In truth, these forty thousand dollars of



corporation bonds belonged to Dace and Pactolus, which Nathan was thus temporarily using to help him over the pressure in the financial panic. All would come right, no doubt, in a couple of months, and therefore he was willing to take the responsibility.

Sabina, however, had a suggestion to make. He had learned from some quarter that Nathan had in his possession an old lease on his property, made many years before to Mr. Gray. To be sure, a release was executed, and therefore the document was void; still purchasers had heard of its existence, and it affected the value of lots when sales were advertised. He wished, therefore, this old parchment destroyed or out of the way, as it was more of an annoyance to him than an encumbrance on the property. As he knew Mr. Trenk would oblige him in this small matter, he was willing to aid him in his troubles at present. Therefore Sabina proposed to make him the loan for sixty days on the bonds, with the understanding that if any loss were on them, and the loan not paid, Nathan should restore him the old lease, which rightfully ought to be cancelled. On these terms the business was closed.

The momentary gleam of sunshine this temporary assistance afforded to Nathan only served, however, to disclose the gloom pervading on all sides. In a few days he discovered his disasters were on the increase, and that Sabina's aid had not averted the hand of fate. Unless came soon a change for the better, he would neither be able to repay Sabina's loan nor replace the bonds used of Pactolus and Dace. He must give up the old lease of Mr. Gray. A sudden thought of horror struck him. He paused, with a pang at his heart which choked his breathing, while the cold sweat stood on his forehead. Merciful heaven! could it be possible the old



parchment lease for ninety-nine years was a valid, subsisting estate in the property? Could he have fallen into a snare set for him by that simpleton, Sabina? He, Nathan Trenk, to cheat the orphan! Above all, to defraud the lovely, unfortunate Emma Gray! A half hour of intense bitter thought demonstrated to his acute business perceptions that Sabina had but one object in his seeming generosity—the possession of a valid deed. For, if it were invalid, why not show it, why not prove it, why not record the release and have it set aside?

In the complication of difficulties, now tinged with coming crime, if not already consummated, Nathan lost all command over the heretofore clear exercise of his reasoning faculties. For the basis of all right reason is truth, and now guilt had entered his mind, which is at eternal enmity with truth. No wonder he could not counsel himself how to act, for to the guilty that is impossible in the very nature of our intellectual organization. Ruin, dishonor, and infamy, were before him; but nowhere had he a friend to advise him. No client had ever entered his office more helpless.

In the few short weeks still intervening before the sixty days would expire, Trenk could not discern any source whence relief was to come. Indeed he ceased to hope, resigning himself, without any further efforts, to despair. Dace and Pactolus were at Newport. If they were in the city they might demand their bonds. He therefore did not wish to see them, so that the evil day of reckoning might be postponed. Incapable of sleeping, destitute of appetite, and without the energy to take his usual exercise, he shut himself up in his rooms, to exclude light, air, and even the face of fellow-creatures. Each day the papers published some new and appalling failures in commercial circles, and he did not desire



to proclaim his own misfortunes. They would be known soon enough. When he did venture forth, it was only at unusual hours, in unfrequented places where no one was to be seen. In one of these, however, he accidentally encountered Charles Nevil. But Nathan, with a guilty conscience, imagined he knew of his infamy and his losses, and therefore hurried on, even avoiding the same side of the street. What misery would have been spared to him, had he not averted his haggard countenance. Had he but spoken, Charles Nevil would have proved himself the friend he needed. But guilt had made him a coward, to steal away to hide his dishonor.

He had solicited the aid of Mr. Nevil on his return; but then Nevil was himself embarrassed. In a few days, however, he had sold out at a sacrifice all his available securities, and with the proceeds commenced a system of financial tactics predicated on a general prostration of credit, which soon not only retrieved his losses but doubled his wealth. Thus had the improper means to which Nathan resorted only deprived him of the sense of conscious rectitude that would have enabled him to face and find an all-powerful friend in Nevil. Fate, however, had otherwise decreed it; and Trenk returned to his rooms, bereft of reason, to write, not knowing what, to Dace and Pactolus, and to forget it when the letters were sent.

In a few days Sabina would claim the performance of the agreement. In a few days, therefore, Emma Gray, the helpless orphan, would be defrauded by this nefarious transaction. But now Trenk had lost all command over himself. His brain and veins were on fire with a liquid heat; his mouth and tongue perpetually parched with a burning thirst that water did not assuage; he could not read, nor write, nor think; he discarded books, papers, and business. Neither



notes nor letters were opened. He wished himself dead, but was afraid to destroy himself. He dreaded the pain of dying.

A letter was received from Pactolus, but unnoticed. Its contents were found afterwards to be :

*"My Dear Sir :* Sorry to hear you are hard up. Glad to learn you planted the bonds to fructify in the hands of Sabina. But if this be their seed-time, harvest will come in the next century. It is some comfort to learn you could use them, for they are down to nothing ; not worth a continental—mill-pond. I send you enclosed a check on the Trust Company, which you can fill up with the proper figure to suit your grief. Some thirty thousand are therein unto me appertaining, put in by an old uncle for safe keeping. Double the amount if you can. I see they have prayer meetings in Wall street, which have lowered Centrals and Erie. But Celestials are up, with a further rise expected, being of the new airline. Take care Sabina is not in a corner with Brimstone, running the heavenlies to the highest figure to sell out. When the Don can read his title clear, he will make some money from the parchment. He don't go to preaching for the fun of the thing. His New Jerusalem has golden streets, where the angel he wants must have plenty of precious jewels to watch his slumbers. Buy a few fifty-shares of the common fancy stocks, and double on the 'Old Hundred' with Mellowtone. Pray unto the Lord, and keep a stiff bank account. And, if I should die before I wake, I remain in rectified spirits, yours, etc."

Another came from Harry Dace, as follows :

*"Dear Trenk :* I think you had better sell my U. S. stock,



say at 115, and take the proceeds for your own use, or operate on joint account. Not having touched the tiger, I am in fur. I hold a good many first mortgages, and they want me to take back the property for the amount on their face. Sure to do it unless you advise not. Never mind the bonds you write about. If you are dead-broke I will set you on your pins again."

Other friends could neither be seen nor written to. Soon after their return from the South, Morton Burk had gone to Sharon with the Lady Dowager. Walter Parker was also out of town for the summer. But at the time when Nathan's misfortunes were culminating, Morton came back to the city without calling to see him, for Morton had his own troubles, although not those of business or of financial speculations. His affection for Mary, the pretty Rose-Bud, was undiminished, while the course of his true love seemed to run without a ripple of uneasiness on its placid surface. But still disquiet was beneath. The Rose-Bud had been thinking seriously of her position to him while he was at the South. On his return, although kind and loving as ever, yet care and a melancholy sadness were depicted on her frank and heretofore contented countenance.

She told him what had been the nature of her thoughts, and for him to reflect seriously whether it were not better for them to part, as she could perceive much unhappiness as well as injury to his prospects in life by the unfortunate attachment. This conduct in her, instead of abating his ardor for the beautiful and disinterested girl, only served to add new incentives to his passion. He therefore went reluctantly to Sharon, to return as quickly as he could be relieved from attendance on his aged relative.



In the meanwhile Sabina visited her frequently and had become in some way apprised of the cause of her grief. He exerted himself very assiduously to dispel her uneasiness, while manifesting the utmost friendship for Morton, assuring her it would all eventuate in their happiness without any cause on her part for making him and herself miserable with her romantic notions about duty and propriety. Let Morton consult his own welfare, he urged upon her, for he surely was more competent to decide on what was best for his own comfort and interest. The Rose-Bud was soothed with the arguments of Sabina, for they were on the same side with her heart in this important question. She began to entertain a more favorable opinion of Morton's friend ; for in truth, heretofore, she had a slight repugnance to Sabina. He was, therefore, more frequently with her, his society affording some sort of consolation against her self-reproaches in solitude for having encouraged the attentions of her lover.

Morton's coming home from Sharon brought matters to a crisis. He hastened to see her as she sat alone on a midsummer's night in her little back parlor. The Rose-Bud received him with all the affection and frankness in her kind disposition. He was more madly in love with her as he perceived that grief had only heightened her enchanting loveliness. But when he spoke of his love and his wishes for their speedy nuptials, she shook her head in silent despair and agony of heart.

"No, no, Morton ; I am afraid it never can be."

"Let me, Mary, think for you ; we will be happy."

"Rather let me think for both, sir ; for in your great kindness for me you have forgotten yourself."

"It is true, to see you happy would make me contented for life."



“But could I be happy knowing how much you had sacrificed on my account?”

“What would I lose, Mary?”

“Friends, society, position, and those many little comforts and attentions which at this time you possess. You do not suppose your acquaintances would visit you with me as your wife?”

“What would I care for them, having you to love me and always with me! Besides, it need not be known yet awhile that we are married.”

“That cannot be,” said she, mournfully. “It would be practising a deception, and you know I never harbored deceit. It would be a part impossible for me to act. I should fail and ruin all. But if not, you would cease to love me when finding I could deceive any one.”

“Then let us live away from the world, to form new friendships, with new objects and aims in life, in which we can be interested alike.”

“This sacrifice would be, Morton, more than you could make. You cannot abandon all for me; no one who loved her husband would permit it. It is only to increase our happiness that people become united; and why should I ask you to lose all, lose everything, to make me your wife? We have been educated differently in our pleasures, and tastes, and manners. You have been accustomed to wealth, and fashion, and luxury; but I know nothing of them. As your wife, under the most favorable circumstances, I am afraid that your poor Rose-Bud would soon fail to please you, and then she would droop and wither, to die young upon your bosom if you would grant her that last happiness in this world.” And here the innocent girl threw herself into the arms of her lover, sobbing as though her heart would break.



Morton clasped her to his soul while imprinting burning kisses on her lips.

"You must not talk so, my dear Mary. But it will never do to let my aunt, the old lady, know we are married."

"Oh, Morton, would you treat her thus? She has been kind and generous. Why, then, should you deceive her?"

"She has no right to interfere with my happiness. Besides, it is only her family pride that prompts her liberality, and not from any love for me."

"No matter what it is, dear, dear Morton. Still you have consented to her terms; at least such is her understanding, and if you displease her, you not only do wrong but are ruined. She is entitled to your duty, to your respect, and some affection, being in the place of a parent to you. No good can come of disobedience. My heart is breaking while I say so; but as I am true to you, be true to her as a son. Only with her consent would I yield to your wishes, and as that is hopeless, let us talk no more of this. Will you not, Morton, please pity me and forgive me in my distress?"

"Where is this to end, my Mary, my dear Rose-Bud?"

"God only knows, Morton. I have often asked myself the same question. God only can tell. I put my trust in Him. I strive to do right, and submit the rest humbly to His will. Something whispers to me that we will never be united. Often I thought it would yet all be well; but the dream was one of too much happiness for this world ever to come true. The pleasure was too great to be realized. I doubted it, and now feel that it is too much for me to expect. This certainty has made me miserable. I only hope and strive to make you more fortunate."

Burk could only press her to his heart, while her tears fell copiously on his bosom.



“Now go, Morton, will you? for you are distressed, and I feel for you and pity you. I do not wish you to forget me unless it must be for your happiness.”

“Never, never, Mary. You must be mine. For while this heart beats, and my lips can utter your name, I will love no other—no other but you, my own dear Mary.”

He imprinted many kisses on her lips, cheeks, and forehead before tearing himself away from her presence. For hours thereafter the generous girl could feel the imprints of his caressing on her burning countenance.

---

## CHAPTER XLII.

THE Rose-Bud was inconsolable in the misery which she suffered, and also for that which in her sense of duty she inflicted upon Morton. But she was not of a disposition to abandon herself to despair in her troubles. Other interests and other cares demanded attention. Her father was becoming more feeble and dependent upon her. His health was suffering for the want of air and exercise. Major Waywode was very kind to the old man, but Mary feared her parent had more bodily infirmity than was known.

Sabina had often pressed Mary to take her father on an excursion down the bay in his yacht the Chula. Mary consented from time to time, but had not as yet gone, from accidental causes. Again he urged her to name a day when he could receive them on board, and she had appointed one which happened to be the next after her last painful interview with her unfortunate lover. However much she may now



have wished to remain at home, she stifled the whisperings of her heart, in order to think only of her father, whose health might be benefited by a sail upon the water.

Don Nicolas was prompt to come for them at noon in a carriage, when he drove them down to the Barclay street ferry, whence they could cross the river to Hoboken, where the *Chula* was at anchor. At the ferry Mary accepted his arm, while her father was in advance under the care of Waywode. In the crowd, however, Sabina manœuvred to separate the *Rose-Bud* from her parent: for she was listless and inattentive to what was passing around her, trusting to Sabina to conduct them safely.

But on the river, when she perceived the absence of her company, he calmed her anxiety with the assurance that by mistake they had gone on another boat, which would detain them only for a few moments. Thus comforted, she arrived at Hoboken, where a yawl belonging to the yacht carried them on board. Without hesitation she sprang on deck, and was persuaded to go below into the after-cabin to wait for her father's arrival.

Many beautiful objects were in the luxurious room to excite her attention, and it was only after her curiosity had somewhat subsided she discovered the door was closed. She was alone, and a sense of fear came over her for an instant, as she turned to go on deck. But the door was locked: she was a prisoner; courage almost forsook her at the discovery. She could have screamed from terror, were she not aware no one was within the sound of her voice to assist her. Another door led into the forward apartment, but on trial it, too, was barred. Throwing aside a curtain, she beheld an obscure narrow passage-way, at the end of which she seemed to recognise sitting on a bench a female figure.



“What is the meaning of this?” cried Mary, bounding forward to the old woman, as if to find safety in her company. “What is the meaning of this? Why have they locked the doors?”

The woman thus accosted dropped her folded arms and gazed steadily in the face of the Rose-Bud without making any answer. Mary shrank back in horror from the hideous features of the object before her. Although emaciated almost to a skeleton, a swollen expression was in her visage, especially about the eyes, which is produced by strong liquors. A cap partly concealed her coarse grey hairs that straggled down her wrinkled, bloated cheeks. She had in her white gums but one large, loose tooth, which she pressed to and fro with a finger of her shrivelled hand, as she rocked her body back and forward on the bench.

Smothering her disgust, Mary repeated the question. But the hag neither noticed her words nor removed the fixed gaze upon her countenance. Satisfied at last with looking at the lovely features of the Rose-Bud, she pressed her tooth as she muttered: “I see how it is. Another crying baby for the voyage, and then no more drink for me; nothing but trouble, trouble with children.”

“But I am going on no voyage,” cried Mary, in her agony.

“Yes, but you are; we have cut loose and are drifting down with the tide. Look out of the bull’s eye and see for yourself.”

“Oh, my God! What will become of me?” murmured the innocent girl, leaning up against a bulkhead.

“Good times for a few months, while you serve him; then comes the devil to take you as he has taken the others. I sold my soul to hell and gave my body to old Santa Lucia long before the boy was born. The devil and drink have me



now for damnation, and will have you, too, or you will be dead and buried in the sea."

Speechless with horror at the revelation of such wickedness, Mary felt her knees sinking beneath her, and she staggered back to the cabin, to throw herself on a sofa with a sickening sensation of misery and almost madness.

Soon after Sabina entered through a shifting panel, so as to be unseen until he stood before her. He took her hand gently in his, but she sprang from him as if touched by an adder.

"What means this outrage upon me!" she exclaimed, forgetful of her peril, in burning indignation at his audacity.

"Softly, softly, sweet Mary; your anger is uncalled for. You will think better of me in time, when you find how much I have risked to possess you," said he, with a sneer of triumph on his lip. "I never tell my love when rivals are near. I prefer my own way of managing matters, which are generally successful."

"You dare not do me wrong!"

"Certainly no wrong, sweet one. Love, like time, sets all things even. You are now without a lover; therefore take me."

"Never, never; sooner would I die than submit to such an insult!"

"Take things gently, gently. A sea voyage will soon bring you to your senses."

"Do you intend to carry me to sea by force against my will?" she cried, with all her fears returning.

"No force in the business. The Chula is bound to the tropics, and you are on board; that's all. You came right willingly."

"I cannot believe you intend to ruin a poor girl like me.



I know you are a gentleman who would not be guilty of such a crime. Remember I am a helpless, poor, and motherless orphan. I have to work hard for a living, and with my old father to support. You must pity me; but you can do me no harm. It would be too cruel—" Sobbing violently prevented further utterance of her thoughts.

"Mary, you know not what man will dare when he loves as passionately as I do. I would sacrifice heaven and earth to accomplish my purpose. I have no fear when love impels me on. I love you to madness, and nothing can be too rash for me to attempt or too criminal for me to execute. You may know the worst at once, and prepare to meet with no mercy from me."

Sabina's features were convulsed with fearful passions, as he tried to talk calmly of his base intentions. But the words came hissing from his lips, and fell like a doom of perdition on her ear. He was about to speak further, when he was summoned on deck. He quitted her with a look such as left no hope behind.

"Then, knowing the worst, I will meet it," she exclaimed, starting frantically to her feet, as all the terrors of her perilous position fled from her mind. Her nerves were firm, and her resolve was high to save herself or perish before dishonor. Throwing her eyes around the room, she took in every object at one comprehensive and scrutinizing glance, and, with a moment's hesitation, she sprang upon a table to grasp the jewelled handle of a poniard scarce visible from behind a magnificent picture-frame. A smile of daring courage for an instant illumined her countenance, as she examined and fondled the deadly weapon. She put it in the rich sheath to place it in her bosom.

"Now let him come. Come when he may, I fear him not;



and may the Almighty pardon a poor girl who saves herself from wrong, from remorse, from dishonor." She paced the room with the tread of one stung to frenzy by the crime with which she was menaced. Her resolution seemed to grow stronger as she contemplated the outrage in all its horrors, and it was only when her strength gave way under her intense excitement that she threw herself upon a seat.

Her humble home arose before her vision, such as it would appear when she was gone, was lost, was worse than in the cold grave. No one now to comfort Morton in his misery; no one to encourage him in the path of duty or to promote his happiness. What, too, would he think of her? No, no; he would know she was abducted by force. He would love her, he would pity her; it would kill him. Then her aged, helpless, desolate parent! How could his days be prolonged in her absence, without her watchful care over him? He would need everything, and yet have nothing, for he would soon be in poverty and childless. But Providence had watched over them before. His hand might yet avert this calamity. For an instant she had forgotten His arm that had been to her a shield in danger, an unerring guide in times of trial and distress. Why did she now despair of His aid? In Him she would still put her trust. Bursting into a flood of tears, she drew the poniard from her bosom to gaze on its keen edge and dazzling richness, as she once more recalled her sinful intentions to use it in self-defence: then the innocent orphan cast it thoughtfully from her, exclaiming: "I will do no murder." But all hope fled with it; her nerves and mind sank under her inevitable, impending fate, and with a cry of despair, she fell prostrate to the floor, insensible in a swoon.

The same afternoon, when the bells of Trinity were ringing



merry chimes, Morton Burk stood in Wall street listening to the sweet sounds. A note was slipped into his hand as he listened, and a harsh voice grated on his ear: "Hasten to the South Ferry!" He opened the note to read rapidly these lines written in pencil:—

"The Rose-Bud has been enticed on board the Chula. She is lost beyond redemption. Save her, if you can, and you will have the aid of

"CHARLES NEVIL."

Morton looked around in a bewildered stupor, but no one was near him who could have been the messenger. He walked up the street without being conscious of his movements, although bending his steps in the direction indicated by the mysterious voice. On reaching Broadway he entered a stage, which soon whirled him with swift speed down to the Battery. Upon the parapet, near the flagstaff, stood Charles Nevil, watching intently the movements of a small steam tow-boat, the Yellow Jacket, coming round from the North into the East river. As it approached he hailed, desiring the master to stop. Without accosting Morton in his haste and anxiety, he hurried him into a small skiff, in which they were soon rowed to the side of the steam-tug.

"Are you engaged at this moment, Captain?" asked Nevil, as he and Morton climbed on board.

"Not in particular, sir. What do you want?"

"Do you see yon top-sail schooner floating down with the tide through the Narrows?" asked Nevil.

"Well, what of it?"

"For an attempt to overhaul her I will give you one hundred dollars. If you succeed in putting me on board, five hundred."



Instantly the paddle-wheels were in motion, and the Yellow Jacket was heading towards Staten Island. The little craft flew through the water as the captain ordered the engineer to carry the heaviest head of steam she would bear. Nevil, in the meanwhile, informed Burk of Sabina's nefarious intentions, and in a few words gave an insight into his despicable life and former adventures. The chase promised to be a long one, with the chances on the side of the yacht escaping. The tide was now nearly on a stand, but a favorable breeze was springing up from off Long Island, which would soon fill her sails and send her in a short time to sea beyond pursuit.

It was the movements of the Yellow Jacket which attracted the notice of the *Cabeza Negra*, and, in his watchful suspicion, had induced him to call Sabina on deck from the side of the drooping Rose-Bud. But Sabina for once was deceived. He would not believe a steamboat was in pursuit. No one as yet, he imagined, could suspect his design, and least of all could the old man, or Waywode, command the services of a towing vessel for such a purpose, even if they were alarmed, which was not probable. The steamboat, no doubt, was running to the Quarantine or to the Hook to bring up some merchantman inward bound. Sabina, therefore, dismissed all thoughts on the subject, to turn his attention to clearing the decks and putting everything in its proper place preparatory to their reaching blue water.

But the Yellow Jacket was gaining on the yacht. Morton was urging the captain to burn some staves he found on board, so as to generate more steam, while Nevil in his impatience had seated himself on the safety-valve for the same purpose. Staten Island was passed with the hull of the Chula visible to the south of them. But the breeze was holding fair, which was an advantage to Sabina. The Hook was in



sight, where he would be safe, for the little river craft could not venture out in the ocean beyond the bar.

As the tide went down a mist rose over Coney Island, indicative of coming rain. At the next instant a puff of wind blew in their faces, which made the sails on the Chula flap upon the spars and cordage. Another still stronger puff checked the onward motion of the yacht. The top-sails had to be taken in, with a reef in the jib. Her course was laid to the east, with an indication of all hands on board running to the hal-yards to let go on the instant. Now the steamboat gained rapidly upon the Chula. But as the lowering horizon threatened a heavy gale, Sabina was too intent on the management of the yacht to cast even a hasty glance astern. Black clouds spreading themselves over the bar seaward, and casting a sombre shadow like a funereal pall across the bay, rolled along the heavens rapidly till they hung over their heads, where, bursting in torrents of rain, they almost shut out all light of day.

At the same moment the little Yellow Jacket ran alongside of the yacht and made fast. A vivid flash of lightning dazzled the sight of the sable crew, and a crashing thunder-clap completed their consternation, as Burk sprang on board among them to attack Sabina, who was standing by the main-mast. The impetuosity of Morton's onset threw back his adversary. But immediately recovering his feet, he hurled Burk from him with violence. Again Morton turned to the charge, striking his foe with his fist. On the instant they grappled in a deadly struggle, which would have brought Sabina prostrate to the deck had not Morton's foot slipped; but seizing Sabina by the throat, he pressed him to the further side of the yacht. Sabina was feeling for a weapon in his bosom, and as they touched the outer edge of the deck, he



brandished it in his right hand to strike it deep into Morton's shoulder. A second blow came with redoubled force upon a vital part of his neck, at the moment when Burk had almost thrown him overboard. Morton's grasp relaxed under the mortal wound with his body bending over the side of the yacht, while Sabina, shaking off his dying hold without much effort, threw his nearly lifeless body into the dark sea. But as Morton plunged headlong, another flash of lightning revealed a red-spot suddenly visible behind Sabina's left ear, with blood trickling down to his neck, and his arms thrown wildly above his head. He gave but one piercing yell of agony, and, reeling, fell dead into the deep.

No one had heard the report of a revolver near the wheel-house where Nevil stood on the tow-boat; no one had witnessed the pistol falling into the water in the drippings of the paddle-boxes: for amid the roar of the winds and ocean, and loud peals of thunder, the escape-pipe was sending off its hissing, blinding vapor with a deafening noise. In imminent danger of a collision, and in apprehension of being swamped, the Yellow Jacket cut loose from the yacht, as the storm was now increasing to a hurricane, while the crew of the Chula, intent only on their personal safety, clewed up the fallen sails and cast anchor.

The Rose-Bud recovered for a moment from her fit of insensibility and despair to open her eyes, unconscious of her position. A beautiful being, such as she had never seen in the form of man, stood over her with beaming eyes of pity and compassion looking down with tenderness upon her prostrate form upon the floor. But a cloud of forgetfulness came over her as she closed her eyes from a flash of lightning. She was incapable of thought or action, while she lay almost breathless.



Yet there was a sense of something being done for her relief and for her good. No dread of coming evil was on her mind, nor sound, nor movement indicative of meditated wrong. A dream of security, of pleasure, pervaded her being, while caresses were bestowed upon her such as she received from her dear mother in infancy.

Her little straw bonnet being untied, was laid carefully away, her tresses put back, and her temples bathed delicately as her head rested on the lap of some one. A pleasant liquid, sweet and strengthening, was placed to her parched tongue, and it seemed that several times her lips and fingers received impressions of kisses on them. Her dress was unfastened, her stays unlaced, to remove a load from off her throat. She was gently raised from the floor; the motion was palpable, but not the arms that encircled her, for every touch of that ministering angel was unlike the touch of mortal. Her head was now upon a pillow, her limbs were on a soft, yielding couch.

Was this death?—for all was as still in earth and air as if pitying spirits were weeping. Had she shaken off the body before it had received contamination? Was she now free to revel in realms not visited by remorse, where good deeds done heretofore are rewarded? Some fears had come over her, but for what, or when, was forgotten, as they were now gone. No harm could come in the presence of that one with beauteous eyes, who looked into her soul to read nothing but innocence therein. Does he still chafe her soft fingers and smoothe her brow with an exquisite perfume? Do their lips touch as she breathes sweetly from the silken pressure upon her mouth?

Tenderly, tenderly, sir, lay her down in that humble bed whereon her mother died years ago. Ask not the old man with grey hairs and vacant look to furnish you with aid.



Send him who stands by the door, quickly, quietly for the physician whose name is on the card. At the signal written, at the secret sign, he will come swiftly on the summons, be it at midnight or morn, from the banquet or bower, from nuptials or the initial breathings of his first-born. Close the coarse curtains of her home gently from external sounds, and in the dim twilight one more last, long kiss; then silently steal away unknown, wishing no recognition: unknown, wishing no recompense for saving the beautiful but poor, helpless, motherless girl.

---

### CHAPTER XLIII.

IMPORTANT events are often crowded into a single season, sometimes into a few days. It seemed, however, that coincident revolutions should take place in the fate of those the current of whose lives had heretofore run smooth, and the same last hours when closed the existence of friends should mark Nathan Trenk's most distressing paroxysm of mania. His malady would have been known to others had it not become known to himself. Loss of memory, want of the faculty of attention, an incapacity to reflect steadily on his contemplated wrong to Emma, along with his nervousness, gave him proof that his mind was gone, especially on one most painful subject.

He was moreover seized with a hydromania that impelled him to seek some stream of water to slake his ever burning throat and cool his feverish brow. Conscious that he might perish, perhaps, in the depths of the river, still the anticipat-



ed pleasure, while revelling in the cold tide, drinking in its freshness, and exhaling it from his ears and nostrils, was an imaginary, agreeable sensation too enticing to be resisted. Trouble was upon his brain when he thought of Emma Gray and the deed belonging to her, which he had in his pocket for greater safety.

He would take the deed with him, for he would never part with it. Sabina should never touch what belonged to Emma. In the rippling currents, in the cool eddies of the rapid river, he would read the document and restore the property to her. Once in the soothing element, he would be safe, free from pain, and all would be well.

Rushing wildly from his rooms after the hour of sunset, he roamed through unknown streets, seeking for the refreshing streams to wash away his sufferings. He looked neither to the right nor left: but bent upon one object, his vision, with straining eyes, was concentrated to the front for a sight of the river to which he was hastening. He was deaf to all the usual sounds around him; he was blind to all the strange sights that impeded his footsteps; he was indifferent to the dangers or accidents which might befall him on the encumbered pavements. He did not see the lamp-lighter hastening from post to post. He did not hear the newsboy crying an "extra, of bloody murder and drowning at Sandy Hook." He did not heed the policeman staring in his face, half resolved to arrest him.

Yet the river seemed to elude his search and to fly from him when most certain it was near. At last he saw, or imagined that he saw, the docks and shipping; and with accelerated stride he hurried along, to rush upon a house where the street ended. Progress to the front was now impossible, the way to the river uncertain and bewildering to his confused



brain. Turning to the right, he followed a narrow lane between old wooden houses, which brought him soon to an open place where four or five streets met. He halted to look for the river, but it was not in sight. Doubting the road to take, he hurried on. But in a few moments he paused, and then seated himself upon a kerb-stone to rest, or rather from exhaustion.

Something was in the locality, in the very stone he occupied, that brought back a glimmering of former memories. Something akin to a dream of boyhood stole across his dormant faculties, slightly reviving the scenes and incidents of youth. All the objects around had a faint resemblance to his juvenile play-ground. The stone upon which he sat was a familiar sight, for there he had often cracked nuts and sharpened his many-bladed knife. The old pump hard-by he had known in former times; and the grocery, and canvas-awning, and signs above the doors, the shade-trees and sidewalks of broken bricks. The houses, too, were the same, but old and dingy, more compact, and much smaller than in times past.

How he had come here he did not know; nor did he recollect the events that had preceded his arrival. A blank was in his mind. But, conscious at present, he was oblivious as to the day of the week and hour now passing away. Slowly rising to his feet, he walked on to push open a gate leading into a yard, and entered a plain two-story building at the backdoor. Passing forward into a front room, he threw himself on a bed, while a heavy groan escaped him as returning reason redoubled his agony at the thought of his wrong to Emma Gray.

The noise he made in the house attracted the attention of an elderly woman who was its occupant. She hastened to the



bedside. For a moment she stood terrified at the sight of Trenk, who was writhing in intense pain. But as he turned on his side, their eyes met.

"Nathan, dear Nathan," she exclaimed in her fright, "what brings you to me? Are you very sick? Shall I send for the doctor?"

"No, aunty," he answered, "let me go to my grave. I want no doctor. I want to die!"

"What is the matter?"

"Matter enough to make me miserable, and it is best it be not known."

"Then you are not sick?" added the woman, who was none other than the German laundress, Rosey, here in her own home.

"If I were sick, dear aunty, you could relieve me; but this is worse than disease. It is madness, insanity, with which I am punished; for I am a villain!"

"Don't say that, Nathan, or you will kill me," cried Rosey, in her new fears this speech awakened. "Don't say so; you could harm no one. Poor fellow!"

"But I tell you I have; with baseness, with dishonor, with guilt on my soul. I cannot live and think of that poor orphan girl whom I have ruined."

"A poor orphan girl!" repeated the laundress. "Oh, Nathan, how could you do that?" sobbing while she spoke. "But maybe she is to blame."

"Aunty, you do not know who you are talking about," rising and seating himself on the bedside. "She is young and innocent; she believed me her friend, and how have I betrayed her. I ought to have protected the helpless lady, but I have been a knave. In the temptation, I forgot all that you had taught me; and Emma Gray is the sacrifice."



A piercing cry from the woman, with uplifted hands, startled Nathan, as she sank in a fainting fit to the floor, screaming: "His own sister!"

Stunned by the exclamation, Trenk for an instant forgot to rush to her assistance. But he now hastened to raise her up and lay her gently on the bed.

"Dear aunty, aunty, listen to me," said he, soothingly, while he took her hand. "You have not understood my words. I have cheated Emma. I have robbed her of her property, and in that way have been her ruin."

"She had no property," Rosey faintly replied, with her eyes closed, as if in mental prayer.

"So she thought; as you thought; as the world believes. But it was not true. Her father possessed some lots now valuable. At his death they were worth nothing, and his title to them unknown."

To this Rosey only shook her head doubtingly, with a sigh and flood of tears.

"Do you think, aunty, I could tell you a falsehood? Did I ever deceive you? You know me better. You know me incapable. Then believe me now, and I will soon convince you that I have ruined her only in her fortune."

"Nathan, you have wronged her; you say you are guilty. Maybe now you are cheating me if you are so wicked."

"Aunty, it is cruel in you to increase my sufferings and remorse. Why will you not comfort me in believing the truth, bad as it is? See, here is the deed in my pocket which describes the property."

Rosey took the parchment, and, getting up from the bed, moved to the light and opened the document to read. But at the same instant a newsboy climbing to the window, shouted in: "Hear you are, an extray; arrival of the Yoller Jacket;



bloody murder, and two rich young men drowned at Sandy Hook. Duel in high life; death of Morton Burk and Spaniard Sabynay. Here you are, only a half-dime. Burk and the Spaniard drowned!"

Nathan snatched the printed sheet from the newsboy and hastily devoured the few lines of information. Seizing his hat from the floor, he ran into the street.

Again the people whom he encountered believed him the madman, as he moved on seeking the most direct course to Hoboken, where his yacht was moored. Now no mental aberration was on his mind, but free and clear; with only one idea, however—to hasten to Sandy Hook to know the worst, and even at the worst to rescue the body of the beloved Morton Burk.

As he reached the ferry he recognised two branch-pilots, whom he pressed into his service. With these he went on board his yacht. And soon her sails were spread for the Hook. The Chula was still at anchor where the catastrophe happened. It was now past midnight when Nathan stepped on deck to summon the *Cabeza Negra* to his presence. That worthy gentleman was inclined to silence, not wishing to be interrogated, excusing himself under the plea of not understanding what was said to him. But Nathan soon brought him to a different view of his position, plying him with arguments in Spanish and Portuguese, which augmented his fears, until he melted into a talking mood. Moreover he was relieved in knowing that Trenk wished only for such information as to the state of the wind, the tide, and other facts at the time of the tragedy that would enable him to prosecute his search for the body with intelligence and some hopes of success.

When morning dawned, Trenk enlisted wreckers and



others familiar with the channels or currents, to assist. At noon their efforts seemed unavailing, with a disposition on the part of many to relinquish further pursuit in despair; but before evening a shout came from a small oyster sloop, and signals for Nathan to hasten. On his arrival he was disappointed when seeing the men had nothing. But they beckoned for him to approach, and they pointed in silence down into the placid water, where beneath him he saw Morton Burk standing upright, with his feet upon the sandy bottom. Tears came into Nathan's eyes at the affecting spectacle, while the men, lowering a rope, succeeded in attaching it to one arm of the corpse to raise it with ease to the surface.

The body was taken on board the yacht where Morton had so often passed many happy hours. Now the crew were in mourning, the pennon at half-mast, as they sailed up the Bay. On an intimation to the *Cabeza Negra*, the Chula followed, and some other small craft, falling into line, spread their sails with streamers lowered, indicative of the calamity in which all were interested. On arriving at the city, Nathan, with much reluctance, quitted the side of his deceased friend to give way for those whose services are required with the dead. But he ordered that all needful offices to the remains of poor Morton should be performed on board the yacht, for he deemed it proper to retain the corpse till morning, when it could be borne in a befitting manner to his late residence at the mansion of Mrs. Vandorp.

Nathan went on shore to return again to the house of his nurse, Rosey. But, although it was now late at night, she had not yet come back from a visit to Emma Gray. In truth on the evening previous, when Nathan quitted her pre-



sence, she had lost no time in seeking Emma. Nothing would satisfy the laundress save a personal explanation from the orphan girl. Therefore Rosey, keeping the precious parchment document in her hand, walked with all speed to seek her. Throwing herself into a seat when reaching Emma's quiet room, where she found her reading (for Rosey was both agitated and fatigued), she accosted the young lady with as much composure as she could summon.

"How are you this evening, Emma?"

"Very well, dear Rosey; and it is kind in you to come to see me."

"I thought you might be sick."

"No, no, dear Rosey; what made you imagine that?"

"Well, I don't know. People always can't tell what is going to happen," replied the laundress, looking down at the parchment in her hand.

"I pray nothing unfortunate will happen to me, for I never was so happy as I am now."

"Emma, do you know a young man called Nathan Trenk?"

"Yes; yes, I do; I know him well. He is one of my very best friends," her face beaming with delight at the mention of his name.

"Trenk is my name, too."

"So it is, Rosey. I never thought of that. Oh, if you only knew his parents, how fortunate it might be!"

"When did you see him, Emma?"

"Let me see; not for a very long time. It may be three or four months. Why do you ask, Rosey?"

The laundress gave a long sigh of infinite relief, feeling a heavy load was off her mind, as she answered:

"He says you have some property left to you by your father."



"I am afraid Mr. Trenk is mistaken," Emma replied. "The treachery of a merchant ruined my parent and broke his heart. He died, believing himself not only bankrupt but dishonored. It was soon found out he was defrauded; the money was then restored, which enabled them to pay all my father's debts. But that was all; nothing remained for me."

"Who told you, Emma, that it was found out that your father was cheated?"

"My aunt has told me, and my uncle often; very often. You seem to doubt it, Rosey?"

"It was kind in them to make you believe that."

"They did not tell me all about it, for I have the newspaper account which uncle Tantis gave to me, and which I keep in my album." Emma hastened for an old copy of the Sunday Retrospect containing the oft-mentioned article on Chester. It may be well imagined what were the conflicting emotions of the good woman as she read the exculpation of Lionel Gray, whose memory she revered, and also her humiliation, if not self-reproach, in finding she had concealed the knowledge of Nathan's parentage in the mistaken belief that his father's name had become a public stigma which it was better, for the boy's sake, that neither he nor others should ever know.

Rosey heaved a deep sigh as she handed the paper to Emma. The perusal convinced the good woman she had kept a useless secret for a quarter of a century. But how to disclose it was now the difficulty, as she could not summon language to her command in her present excitement to make the needful explanations with which it must be accompanied. In this dilemma she again reverted to the deed for the property, explaining she would be an heiress to an estate having seventy years to run, and making her immensely wealthy.



Having disposed of that subject, Rosey next hinted at Emma finding, perhaps, in Nathan a near relative; adding that she believed his name was not Trenk, from some circumstances within her own knowledge.

However much Emma might have become excited by these revelations so important to her happiness and comfort, they were instantly forgotten when Rosey disclosed the afflicting news of Morton's death. In her thick-falling tears Emma tried in vain to read the "extra" Rosey had brought with her. He was the first friend whom she had ever lost, and now he seemed the only one that had for her the affection of a near and dear relative. It was some consolation to know Nathan had gone to the rescue; and so implicit was her confidence of success in whatever he might undertake, she even had hopes he would restore Morton to life in some way: for she could not imagine him now an inanimate corpse, having seen him only a few days before in full health and vigor. After soothing the distressed girl with many kind words, Rosey finally took her departure.

But Emma was too helpless without Rosey to share her grief. She therefore sent frequent messages to the laundress next day for her to come and comfort her. Rosey, however, was anxiously waiting for news from Nathan with which to afford the distressed orphan some solace, and therefore did not go until evening, when she despaired of hearing from him. It thus happened she was absent when he called at her home. He threw himself on the bed to await her return.

He would have been content to sleep if slumber had come to his eyes. But his nerves were under too much excitement to permit rest to his weary brain. Yet, amid all the agitating thoughts ever present to his busy mind, his memory insensibly led him back to his infancy and boyish days when



this house was his humble and unhappy home. He knew that Rosey loved him as much as it was in her nature to love. But his happiness was affected by circumstances unnoticed by her, and perhaps beyond her influence. He lived among children of his own age, who had their parents to watch them, to pity, to caress, to favor them ; while he stood by to witness endearments never bestowed on him, and to suffer for the faults of others, without sharing in the petty preferences which at the time he thought of the utmost magnitude.

Yet in his infant soul he had yearned for affection from these people. How much had he striven to gain the praise and kind notice of the two foreigners whom he called his uncles. With this object, how ardently had he pursued his study of languages, his lessons in dancing, his music, both vocal and instrumental, on the piano, flute, and cremona, on horns, bugles, and trumpets. They called him a prodigy, and that was pleasing, because it promised affection and regard. They were proud of him. Still their adulation did not bring the recompense he sought ; they loved their own children better than him. The two ladies, his aunts, were equally kind ; never rough nor harsh, but always gentle, encouraging his efforts and extolling his talents. But he knew it, he felt it, he saw it, he could not tell how it was, they did not love him as they loved his playmates.

At night, too, when his aunt Rosey took off his little clothes and bathed him, and heard his baby prayers, and put him into his pretty cot, he had often hung upon her neck to kiss her and beg she would be his mother. And she had promised, often promised with tears in her eyes, wondering much what the dear little fellow wanted. But it was an indefinable something not developed on his mind, inexpressible



in words, but no less painfully felt at heart, a craving experienced by all orphans when more favored children are their companions. Yes, he had been unhappy. He smiled now as he remembered how he had sought affection. He had grown older, more manly, and friends had come—the Druids, Walter Parker, Morton—but here he sprang from the bed, resolved to return to spend the night on the yacht.

The entrance of Rosey, however, postponed his leaving. Their conversation was long and interesting to both, in which she prevailed on him to explain his troubles that had nearly a fatal termination. At last, after midnight, he quitted his former home to go on board the yacht, but with the conviction on his mind that, had he months before made Rosey the confidant of his financial embarrassments, he would have saved himself from all anxiety and distress. She was able and willing to aid him to twice the amount required. His mind was now relieved from all care, and his conscience clear of every stain. Musing on the happy change in his affairs, he felt rejoiced he could now meet his friends as became a gentleman. He only wished Morton were living to rejoice with him.

---

## CHAPTER XLIV.

WITH due solemnity the body of Morton Burk was brought to the venerable mansion, his late residence in the city. The remains were inclosed in a metallic coffin with plate-glass at the head, so as to admit to view his features now calm in death. When the attendants had borne him to one of the inner parlors on the first floor, they slowly retired,



leaving Nathan alone with all that remained on earth of one whom he loved so well. In the dim light of the luxurious apartments, he leaned against the pedestal of a statue, in a remote corner, where he might indulge his grief in the deepest solitude.

The rustling of a lady's dress soon admonished him of approaching footsteps; at the next instant the Lady Dowager entered with slow and stately tread. Her eyes were fixed on the bier where Morton lay encased in all the gorgeous panoply given to those who die in wealth. Steadily the venerable lady approached the coffin to take a long, a last parting look at that face upon which all her family pride had centred. She believed herself alone with the dead. The stillness around was unbroken save by the heavy breathings of her own heart. Into her aged eyes tears welled up which dropped one by one upon the velvet pall. "Gone, gone," she murmured at broken intervals. "All gone. He was the last, the youngest, in whom were all my hopes. Now I am left alone—blasted, withered, desolate, none to live after me, no one to follow me to my grave. All my feelings of love, of affection, and perhaps those which I ought never to have cherished, are buried, buried, as this poor boy will be, in the cold earth, while I remain, to walk a living spectre punished for my sins before my time. Cruel, cruel, has been my lot; as I was cruel to those whom I loved. When will a kind Father bid me go in peace? When will He permit me once more to see Lionel and beg him to forgive a weak, rash, poor woman, whose heart he broke?"

Smothering her emotions and tears, she bowed her face to the corpse, when a slight noise attracted her attention. Supposing she might not be alone, her eyes turned to the pedestal where Trenk was standing. A single ray of sunlight fell



upon his form, revealing a resemblance to lineaments she knew were now not mortal. The obscurity pervading the space near her only afforded clearness to her vision when beholding, in the distance, this unexpected apparition. His countenance was pale and sorrowful, with a pitying expression of intense compassion for the venerable woman whose mournful lament disclosed to him a hidden tide of human woe. He knew the cause of all her affliction, but in his grief for the dead he could not refuse the sympathy he felt for her, the last living of that tragic drama.

He approached to where she stood, while the aged lady started back in amazement as he drew near.

"Again, again you come; wherefore now, unless to upbraid me, Lionel?"

"Not Lionel, madam; not Lionel," said he, respectfully. "I came here to minister to the remains of my dear friend, to shed tears in silence at his side. But if I can comfort the living, while as sorrowful, it may be a more pleasing duty."

"In the name of Heaven, who are you?" exclaimed the lady, trembling. "It is, it is—and yet he says it is not Lionel."

"Pardon me, madam; in this partial light your imperfect vision misleads you."

"Who, who are you?" she repeated, while again "Lionel" fell from her tongue as if an involuntary utterance.

"Not Lionel, let me assure you; but perhaps his son."

"He had no son. O God! that he had only left one!" she cried, with uplifted hands, while her limbs almost sank under her. Nathan hastened to her support, and leaning on his arm, she was led to a sofa. Kneeling at her feet, he took her aged hand to calm her agitation. "His son!" she repeated. "It cannot be; he had no son."



"But yesterday I learned the fact, madam. My father was supposed to have died bankrupt and in infamy. A nurse had me in charge at the time, and in her affection concealed all knowledge of my history, giving me her own name, that I might not inherit a father's shame."

"Can this be true? Can kind Heaven have afforded me an alleviation for my deadly sin? Open the window, quickly, that I may look into your eyes, for your voice in its tones tells me more than your tongue."

When he obeyed her order, he returned to find her weeping with her face buried in the cushion. He sat down at her side, and putting his arm around her, took once more her hand, which she willingly relinquished to him.

"Let me see you; let me see," she exclaimed, and again Nathan threw himself at her feet at her command.

She placed her fingers on his brow to gaze on his manly, handsome features. "Yes, yes, it is too true; the same hair, the same blue eyes with long, silken lashes, the mouth—all, all which once he had. Why did I not know this before? Why did I not save you from degradation, and by so doing, save myself from much pain and endless misery? Poor fellow, your father was cruel; but I forgive him in having you to look upon, to lean upon in my lonely bereavement. Yet you know not, and never will know, how I have suffered."

"Kind, good madam, I know it all; and if a son can be taken for a father's atonement, let me comfort you in saying my parent did you a great, an irreparable wrong; why, I know not. But you and his children have suffered from his act. Be it therefore my duty, as it will always be a pleasure, to console you for your loss and mingle my tears in your afflictions; to be your son if you wish, and to love you, as for many years I have pitied you in my heart."



"Will you be this to me, poor boy; and have you come, when my need was greatest, like a boon from Heaven to bring joy and gladness to me in my distress? Now when the grave closes over Morton, you appear to do more than supply his place. It is strange this revelation is made at the tomb."

"Dear madam, the earth never opens to receive the dead without, at the same time, some facts coming to light not known before to the afflicted family; perhaps to double their anguish, perhaps to relieve a weight from off their souls. It may be you have been favored by Providence in this calamity. Henceforth your burden of trials may be less. Let me, at least, hope so while I strive to realize the wish."

"The weight of years is already off my mind in having you with me. At last the hand of wrath is stayed, for I feel in your presence that sins may be forgiven in mercy. But who is this that enters unbidden and not wished for at this hour?"

Well might this exclamation escape the lips of the lady, as the Rose-Bud, with her little bonnet in hand, her flowing hair falling loose over her shoulders and on her white dress, rushed in to throw herself on the body of her beloved Morton. Kneeling, she fixed her eyes upon his rigid features till tears blinded her sight. She seemed to offer up a fervent prayer in silence for the departed soul, and then to sink upon the floor to clasp her hands in that intensity of sorrow that finds no alleviation in words or weeping.

Nathan had risen as she entered, but in her absorbing desire to see the face of Morton, she had recognised no one in the apartment.

"Who is this young woman?" whispered the old lady in



wonder, and yet not without some sympathy for the poor girl with pallid cheek in overwhelming grief. Nathan made no answer as he looked in pity, deeply affected at the sight of her utter despair and helpless woe. But when the question was repeated, the heart-broken Rose-Bud raised her imploring eyes, for the first time conscious of their presence, as if wishing to hear some kind word from them.

Turning her head despairingly, she looked around the spacious room with a painful expression of countenance, until her eyes rested on a full length portrait of Morton recently painted. She arose from her knees to walk to the wall on which it was hung, and feast her sight with a pleasure she never expected to behold. Her heart-breaking despair softened into a flood of tears as the picture brought back tender memories of the beloved object. Sobbing in her affliction she wrung her hands in silence, without once withdrawing her gaze from off his well known features already impressed upon her soul.

Nathan approached to comfort the poor child, but she was not yet to be comforted. She wept bitterly when he spoke kindly to her. "Thank you, thank you, sir," she replied, choking between the words and swallowing the smothering sensation in her throat. "Thank you, thank you, sir. Will she not give it—give it to me?"

"Anything, everything the Rose-Bud desires belonging to her dear Morton she shall have. Therefore do not weep. We all share your affliction, and you have been taught to know it is best." Nathan had taken her hand as he was striving to soothe her into a calmer mood. "Will she, will she give it—give it to me?" again asked the disconsolate girl. But without waiting for an answer, she ran to the lady to throw herself at her feet.



"Bless you, my child; who are you, and why do you weep for Morton?"

"A poor girl, madam, who loved him too well; better than any one in this world."

"Tell me, sir; who is this beautiful creature? Surely Morton could not have done her wrong."

"No, no, dear madam. I wronged him in loving him as I did, until he forgot you and your kindness; and all for me, unworthy of him. I am poor and ignorant, making a living by my own hands."

"Did Morton form any ties with this poor soul, leaving her now in want to remorse and despair? Speak, sir; tell me all, for you seem to know her history."

"I know only," Nathan replied, "that he loved her. What more, she can inform you. My dear Rose-Bud, will you answer the lady's question?"

"I have nothing more to tell. I loved him, and love him still; and oh, dear madam, if you ever knew what it was to love, to worship in your heart something almost as precious as our heavenly Father, pity me for my love for him. Give me that painting, that I may not be always miserable. Only give it to me, and spare to me some little comfort in this world."

"Yet you blame yourself for loving him, my child. What did he do to you, that you repent of it?"

"He loved me because I loved him. He wished to make me his wife, and I refused, because he had not your consent. Nor could he get it. This made him unhappy, and I am to blame for not thinking in time to save him from suffering."

"Then you would not be his wife because it might have displeased me?"

"Yes, madam. You were kind to him, and treated him



like a son. He had no right to do contrary to your wishes. Then he wanted me to marry him unbeknown to you. Oh, that broke my heart when I told him it was wrong, deceitful, and wicked. But I blame myself for making him unhappy. Do, dear madam, give me his picture, and I will pray for you, as I have often done when I thought how kind you were to dear Morton."

"And you prayed for me, child?"

"I beg your pardon, dear madam, I did; for I could not help it. You loved him; and I heard you were unhappy. I did not forget you in asking that blessings might be bestowed upon you. It was right, I hope?"

"My pretty Rose, it was kind of you. Perhaps your prayers have been answered. You are poor, you say, making your living by work?"

"Yes, kind lady; I have a small store with which to support my old father. For my mother died when I was a little child."

"You shall have the picture," said she, as she kissed the innocent girl's brow, and then abruptly quitted the room.

"Oh, did she say I might have the painting, Mr. Trenk?"

He assured her that she was not mistaken. Perceiving her desire to return to the side of her dead lover, he left the room to her alone, and in the meanwhile took upon himself to give some orders, as everything now seemed to devolve on him. When coming back to the parlor, the afflicted girl was still where he had left her, but calm and more composed. Yet her plaintive tones when speaking were indicative of heart and earthly love crushed. Grateful to Nathan, she would have thanked him for his kindness had she known in what words to express her thoughts; and to be called Rose-



Bud by him came sweetly in such loving, soothing accents, as to recall many but now sorrowing memories of the past.

---

## CHAPTER XLV.

THE excitement of recent events was overpowering to the weak, worn-out nerves of the Lady Dowager. She was now for the first time in many years reconciled to her fate, and inclined to seek repose in a more happy frame of mind. But both body and spirits sank under conflicting emotions, until she settled calmly into that sleep which on this earth knows not breaking. In one month after Morton's funeral, her remains rested in her long-wished-for home in the Trinity burial ground. She was gone at last, having outlived the usual time allotted to mortals, surviving friends and enemies alike, so that neither regrets were expressed nor tears shed at her departure.

The world she created around her to revere and court her, as well as the many families emulous of admission into her patrician circle, were deeply interested in the news of her decease. A new order of things arose from the immediate change in the vast estate she left. The announcement that Nathan was her principal and residuary legatee, was an astounding event to that fashionable class among whom such incidents produce no ordinary sensation. But these ambitious people had not yet returned for the most part to the city. Perhaps Sharon was deserted, yet many still lingered over the grapes and September gossip of Saratoga, or among the falling leaves and fogs of Newport. Others were at their



sumptuous villas, drawing near to their winter-quarters in the metropolis.

It was natural these persons should reflect how they would be affected by this new dynasty coming into power in the fashionable empire. It was a momentous occurrence under this aspect. They remembered with upbraiding conscience how Nathan was treated at New Year, without any consolation to themselves in knowing his subsequent withdrawal from all intercourse boded no speedy admission into the exclusive parlors of the late Dowager. A mental chloroform, however, sometimes blunts if not destroys the self-inflicted pangs from reproachful memories. Under its magical inhalation, oblivion to the disagreeable past in a short period supervenes as a soothing opiate, when the most obstinate facts become transformed into bright, into even laudable actions.

In a private suite of rooms at a Saratoga hotel, Madam Macaroon, the wife of the rich button manufacturer, held high state for a morning reception to her coterie to discuss this question. They were all aware Madam Macaroon was known intimately to Nathan. Her opinions, in consequence, must be founded on extensive accurate intelligence. Her influence it was important to cultivate. Her authority, her power for the time being, were therefore duly conceded and paramount. Madam Macaroon, that precious piece of mother-of-pearl, condescendingly, though modestly, acknowledged the truth of the observations made by the assembled Peri. She believed her feelings had been very warm to him; she had doubted, in fact disbelieved, the rumors; she deplored his situation when he called at New Year. "My two girls, Sarah Matilda and Nancy Jane, actually shed tears, poor dears, when they saw him on that occasion; the stories were so awful, so wicked."



This afflicting sympathy so painfully expressed, and now for the first time made known in the presence of Sarah Matilda and Nancy Jane, caused these "poor dears" to open their eyes in amazement at their mother's cool, but by no means veracious story. When they went to bed that night, however, they vowed they would tell Nathan the truth on the first opportunity, for their mamma had behaved "shameful." But go to sleep my pretty ones, go to sleep Sarah Matilda and Nancy Jane, he knows it all, to remember it hereafter for your benefit, although a repentant tear from the maternal pearl-shell will not open for her some morn the gate of Eden when she stands not alone disconsolate.

Madame Raquetaque, in her bower of honeysuckles at Newport, was in a pensive mood trying to recall her last conversation with Nathan; perhaps at New Year, but she was never accurate as to dates. An impression was on her mind she had snubbed him somehow, somewhere; an impression also that he was impudent in some way. But all the particulars had vanished from her delicate memory as certainly as his person from sight for a long time. She was quite sure he had behaved rudely to her, but with great magnanimity she would forgive it, forget it. She would meet him some time; she would take him by surprise and by the arm, with a "Come, sir, are you never going to dance with me the lancers, the German, or a polka?" In a sudden attack Madam would carry him off, ignoring all previous miff or quarrel, if indeed there ever was one.

But, my good lady, he has not forgotten the time nor under what circumstances he bade farewell to Madam Raquetaque. Once he believed you were his friend, but the recollection of your conduct revives unpleasant, not revengeful, thoughts. To be sure, your name is in the Golden Book of the late



Dowager, her visiting-list, bound in crimson silk velvet with steel clasps. An  $x$  will be found opposite to your baptismal and matrimonial cognomen ; an  $x$  signifying, with mathematical accuracy, an unknown quantity in the sum of his acquaintances, which, when missives are sent out, the messenger will not be required to seek. Perhaps some others may find the same volume to be an *Index X-purgatorius*.

Nathan received a great number of letters from his gentlemen friends, which it was refreshing to count, although many were from persons who he was not aware had ever before expressed half as much interest in his welfare. Glancing his eye hastily over them to look at the words underscored, he threw them aside to read others with more care and satisfaction. One was from Mr. Pactolus, at Newport :

“DEARLY BELOVED :

“It moveth me to write to thee, friend Nathan ; for the sin of omission is on my conscience as a single stain upon my innocent conduct ; my heart being as free from guile as my shirt-frill is from a false bosom. The summer sky opened with a persimmon aspect upon your prospects, but the autumnal luck has brought you out huckleberry. This is poetical, but you need not mention it. The Lady Dowager died in the nick of time, or it would have been Old Nick with somebody. But don't suppose I speak profanely of her ; my pious education forbid : for I was brought up religiously to believe in a pile of money ; therefore her memory is sanctified.

“Now, having found your father, I wish you would help me to look after my grandfather. A great many grandfathers are missing ; some, to be sure, not wanted. But I sent the other day to the Tower of London for a family crest, and they wanted to know my great-grandfather. I was sorry to



inform them that important limb in our genealogical tree had dropped off into the ignoble mud of oblivion. I never heard of him. The tree could now only be known by its fruit in my person, and not by the primitive bark. They said I was of one of the most distinguished branches of the ancient family of Rivers, and charged me two pounds for sending me two l—s, which was, I thought, a 'll of a price.

“Moreover, a physician is sounding the depths of my understanding to find if hereditary gout be in our family ; talking, too, about my grandfather, and hinting at the ancestral ghost of departed spirits, touching me on the toe under the mahogany when too far indulging in after-dinner groceries:—Do you spell it with a *c* or a *z*? People here in this fast community have no Walker’s dictionary except the Railroad Guide-Book for reference when a fellow loses himself among words of three syllables. Of course, therefore, much improper language is in common use, particularly when the coffee or the cars are behind time, or when baggage is lost or smashed up.

“Not a few are in pursuit of biographical knowledge respecting the lucky mourner who has weeped himself into the Vandorp property. The ladies think him adorable without a dissenting opinion, and vote him a perfect love *crim. con.*—which is the French, I believe, for unanimous. Now I am through what I have to mention, and thank the Lord for it. It is such a bore to write letters once in six months, that I feel a pity for poor clerks who have to write them every day.”

Mr. Dace also found time amid his absorbing avocations to make an effort as follows :

“*My dear Nathan* : Luck is a lady, and you are tip-top. She put you last winter in a back pew among the afflicted,



and in the summer scraped the gilding from your capital. But, after all, feminines are useful. When purse and credit wring the brow, a financial agent thou. The Dowager is gone and left her name to other times, linked with one virtue, the almighty dimes. On the strength of your good fortune I resolved to do something for myself and to give the tiger a turn, especially as I had been masticating, free of expense, many woodcock and other game suppers. Being the last night of the bank, I resolved to gamble off my virtuous accumulations.

“Well, you never heard of such a run. Wherever I cut in I made the chips fly unto me, until I had a solid cord and stacked them all at a clip on the king. Doubling again, I Atlantic-cabled to the pot to give me a handsome dividend. Nothing now but \$10 reds, which I columnated on the queen, persuading the old girl to blush like a beauty. Turning to her in time of need, the dealer turned in vain. She came up like moonrise at midnight, large, dark, and swimming in the stream, smiling with gold coins in every beam. I took my pay in Uncle E. P. Unum’s Treasury notes at par. Her majesty still looking seductive on a calculation, I put my trust once more in a princess, and, at the same time, touched the trey, which did not betray me, nor did my trust make me a most unfortunate poor man. For again was a spread of Samuel’s spread-eagles on my behalf. Had I lost, these golden eagles, in their flight, would have been so many lost Pleiads, seen no more below.

“Being a plain, unprotected young man, content with the comforts of life, and not aspiring to its luxuries, I quit at the end of the deal and sent for Sol. You know my black boy, Sol? He came with a carpet-bag to colporteur the chips, for I had won all on the table. This broke up the amuse-



ment, as the players were left without the bankers' elephantine medium, that illegal tender to buck with. I dreamed I felt the ivory balls with Sol and grumblers by my side. Pactolus and Anthon, and many more, grew profane and awful.

"Finally, to save the commandments, I compromised; proposing to sell the carpet-bag, ivories, and all. After some spirited bidding, they were knocked down at a splendid advance on first cost. I then departed from the gay and festive scene where the tiger's chain had bound me. But morning came, and Sol with soap-suds, and sunrise, and soda-water. A gentle breeze and the gentler sex made their presence felt soon after. Next, a storm was brewing, not atmospherically in the upper air, but a ground-swell among terrestrial angels: for a whisper was tempest-tossed—a whisper that I was broke, ruined, and a repentant sinner; cleaned out, no credit, and could not pay. Pactolus told all the dimmity, in a stage-whisper, that I offered to sell my carpet-bag; and another friend, a veracious individual, confessed he had reluctantly contributed some coin. He lies; he gave me his check in four figures. Mysterious was the compression of pouting lips: gloomy the ominous shaking of empty heads and curl-papers, till the ladies were frightened lest I might auctioneer their little personal property given to me by moonlight alone; for it seems I was the moon that looks on many brooks, and now a lunatic, I am not permitted even to sing 'by the margin of fair Zurich's waters.'

"Jelly Demors followed me, about the tenth hour, into my meridian breakfast. It is the hour with cream from cows my nightingale's high-note is heard; it is the hour when lovers vows seem sweet in every buttered word, when boiling tea and coffee near, make music to the lonely ear. She



followed me in, to me give a piece—oh, Juniper ! a piece only—a prodigious, delicate piece of her mind. If the whole pattern is of the same texture in the *dura mater* or *pia mater* of her cranium, I pity the meek mortal who woos her for a *materfamilias* to his offspring. Conscience smites my nerves ; I must have scientifically expressed some such sentiments of admiration for the splendid prologue to her intended popular course of nuptial clinical lectures to me and the bed-post. For she stormed a short period, then changed suddenly into a weeping-willow, and next came out sunshine all in the space of ten minutes. The time was exact by my stop-watch and her regular breathing spell when she once starts. Tear-drops, however, did not soften me into the belief she was infant innocence ; knowing her to be full-grown, with all the baby-tucks in her baptismal linen long since let out. But she can't climb a fence.

“It was tried on too steep and too fast. I thought she never would perorate in her lament over me, a drooping gazelle, who did not love her very well. But her throbs reminded me of her conduct, when it was discovered, in universal horror—when it was found out in a mortified rage, that you were neither blackleg nor libertine.

“Softly I propounded the question if she knew one Nathan Trenk, a poor young gentleman of obscure rank, with parents unknown, who, by his talents, his accomplishments, his universal information, his integrity as a man, his honor and principle as a gentleman, had gained a footing in society ? Did she remember his being Ukrained when found to be neither sharper nor gamester, under both of which redeeming characters he had been caressed ? No pity was shown for his misfortunes, no sympathy for his virtues ; those who prided themselves on their fine cultivated feelings, having



nothing gentle, softened, chastened, Christian, in their hearts for him, poor fellow. Yet without these womanly requisites, they are, of course, still pure under all temptations. Bearing these facts in her innocent mind, I desired the lovely lamb to proceed with her pleasing bleat on gambling. She can't climb a fence.

"I hope she will be comforted with the intelligence that Sol brought back the carpet-bag, in which, however, is no hope for her night-cap on a wedding excursion, being packed cosily side by side in matrimonial alliance with my slippers. If you ever heard she was to become bone of my bone, please announce to the large circle of admiring friends that the ossification is indefinitely postponed. We parted in silence, we parted in spite near the bank of that lonely tiger, and I was left, like the last rose of summer on the Bloomingdale road, going it alone."

With some trepidation Nathan opened the next epistle, with its superscription in a fine, delicate handwriting. The letter contained only a few lines, evidently composed while unconscious of the late important events, concluding, "With much esteem, from your friend Francesca Strafford."

"Many thanks," were the words, "to Mr. Trenk for the periodicals and other valuable presents sent to us, for which we all feel grateful. I write this under instructions from aunt, and am right glad of an opportunity to acknowledge my own obligation for his attention. If permitted to add a word for myself, it would be to express the hope of soon seeing him at our home, where he would receive a cordial welcome."

He replaced, slowly, the brief epistle in its envelope, and picked up the small pieces torn off in breaking the seal,



seemingly careful of the remnants as Allah's faithful followers who destroy no slip of paper, lest, peradventure, a holy name may be inscribed thereon. Nathan deposited the welcome memento in the inner, left side-pocket of his vest-lining for safety and for a second perusal. His pity for the poor child in her monotonous plantation abode was the reason, no doubt, why he forgot to read further on that day from the numerous letters still lying unopened on the table.

But while he was thus receiving congratulations from his friends, others were spreading the intelligence which had astonished so many. The Americans in Paris learned the copious details from innumerable private despatches. Claudia was there at the time for her heart to beat quick with joy at the gratifying announcement. The three Misses Thuppercrust crossed and recrossed their voluminous correspondence to her. The three virgins were on perpetual watch for coming bridegrooms, and these sister-nuns of the white veil under perpetual vows to wedding-cake kept their lamps trimmed with bandoline, burning in readiness for all bridal ceremonies at the church of the Lowly Meekness. Their father was in the vestry by virtue of his two thousand shares in the Oil-of-Vitriol Bank, which imparted to him an unctuous aroma of the highest unquestioned respectability.

Claudia returned in all haste in a crowded steamer. Her arrival was unexpected, but her advent was at a time when the frost-bitten leaves were dropping down from the street lindens, and when the ladies, who all summer long had listened to meadow larks, were dropping in from the country. Her appearance, therefore, was only the more agreeable surprise to render the greetings on all sides only the



more charming. The trip had worked wonders to send her home, the most beautiful among those heretofore preëminent for loveliness. Vocal bulletins were soon spread everywhere of her looks and movements, of her pretty words and much more pretty wardrobe; vocal bulletins of every size, of all sorts; bulletins official, semi-official, and authentic; credible, semi-credible, and incredible for general circulation among the cream of creation.

When she received, her parlors were thronged with those whose attention is the highest honor; with those who, beholding, adored her. They came in strong array to throw fate and fortune at her feet, her loving slaves.

The "Babes" turned out in great numbers to do her reverence, and were, at the midnight hour, often stealing softly beneath her casement invoking her in song to open her lattice—to open her lattice, for love, for love to enter in. After one of these excursions the innocents returned in full force to the Foundling at a very late hour to talk over the affair, to rave over her cruelty, and about their being swamped in her ocean of beauty. Pactolus, one of the party, however, took the matter in moderation, and shook his head at the madness of the youths in extolling her charming loveliness. "You may make cari-hat-ides of yourselves, with baskets of flowers in your heads for her benefit; but it won't pay no more than as many cary-hod-ides with buckets of mortar on your shoulders. Neither perfume nor plaster will fetch her. You may perform the to-cow on your knees in her presence with all the simplicity of sucking calves in search of nature's lacteal restorer. You may bear a heavy piano on your backs for a Baalam or Bray-ham performance at midnight, with the bird of Minerva screeching her wisdom to accompany your area serenade. But still I say it won't liquidate. For she is



one of the Genii from Macgowan's cave who turn lovers into beasts or plumed bipeds, sometimes supplying horns which produce blow-outs in the morning papers, sometimes plucking them clean as a pigeon, in which ornithological costume it is vain to ask any feminine to fly with thee on your Arab steed, for it's no go.

“But before withdrawing, gentlemen, as day is about to break, when every fellow, after a night's pleasant spree, like the Sultan Schahriar in the Arabian Nights, is very willing to cut and run, permit me, a virtuous, beautiful, innocent kind of a Scheherazade, to stay your cruel purpose while I recite to you, oh children of the Grand Vizier, the adventures of a young Mufti living in an amethyst mansion resplendent with fairy magnificence, who threw his affections and scented cambric, according to the custom of the Court of Delhi, upon the beautiful slave Claudia, from the isles of the west. Then of her love for the young Mufti, even when a poor boy he sold figs in the market, unpitied and ill-used, till an old Fatyma of an enchantress at her dying hour took him by the hand and led him to her resplendent palace, changing him into a sovereign prince, to reign where she had wisely governed since the flight of the prophet. How the lovely slave from the isles of the west was sold to the young Mufti, but only on the strict condition that she had permission to leave, with her slippers outside his harem, all her smiles, sweetness, and sentiment wrapped up in a Persian shawl, for her private, exclusive use, hereafter to be ventilated when convenient, separate and apart from her liege Caliph in company with any Bagdad merchant or prince of Damascus, young and handsome, loving like a Feramorz and playing the flute.”

But the pretty Rose-Bud never heard this fairy tale ; nor



would she have listened on one wintry day in December, as she in great trouble hastened down to Wall street to the office of Walter Parker. She was on foot, with the gallant Waywode as her escort. She was in deep mourning for her unfortunate lover: but never did she look more lovely than on this morning with flushed cheek in the cold air. Everybody informed her that the old Lady Dowager had left her a legacy. But having procured a copy of the will, Mary found her name was not in it. Moreover, a lawyer in the Bowery expressed the opinion if her name was not therein it was naught. She now sat in Walter's office in tribulation and in tears, telling her vexation. Mr. Parker was slowly reading the testamentary document with much anxiety on his countenance. He read one long page, and turned over to the second with a desponding sigh. But when he wandered leisurely down to the last line his face illumined with a most joyous smile.

"Why, bless me, Miss Mary, here it is as plain as the spire of Trinity. Only listen to this:

"*Item.*—I give and bequeathe all my several lots of ground lying on the west side of Broadway, and situate between Canal and Spring streets, to the pretty Rose-Bud and to her heirs in fee simple: Also, I give to her the full length portrait of Morton Burk which she now has in her possession."

"Yes, but Mr. Parker, my name is not Rose-Bud, and I cannot claim what is not given to me. So the lawyer said."

"Never mind what the lawyer said, Miss Mary. Believe what I tell you, and understand it if possible. In the inter-



pretation of a will the intention of the testator always governs unless some law term is used, which the courts must interpret according to its meaning in law dictionaries, without being governed by the intention of the testator. Now, here the only law term is 'fee simple,' which, by the way, is inserted at the proper place for your benefit. There is no other Rose-Bud, undoubtedly none half so pretty, nor one with another full length portrait of poor Morton. You were intended, and as a gentleman whom you once knew by the name of Nathan Trenk is the sole executor, he will sign the proper deeds whenever I have them prepared. Rose-Bud is a much more captivating name than Dey of Algiers, to whom a farm was bequeathed in a neighboring state. A young lady claimed the legacy, proved she was intended, and recovered the property. Dey of Algiers! What a name. If she resembled the old reprobate of a Turk, she must have been a beauty."

"Thank you, Mr. Parker," said Mary, rising, much relieved in mind, while pulling out her purse. "How much have I to pay you?"

"Nothing at present," he answered, smiling at her simplicity and dispatch of business. "Perhaps you are not aware of the value of the gift. Bless my soul! Miss Mary, you are an heiress, to indulge in building marble houses of five or six stories, with basements of metallic columns, the pure ironical order of American architecture. And now I have some intention to preach to you and the Major a sermon; but on second thought I forbear, knowing your attention has been drawn to the same text. But whenever you have established the Metropolitan Trimming Boudoir and the Emporium Art Gallery for ladies' gaiters, with a communicating door between, even if the name of the Rose-Bud is



sunk in the new partnership, I will always take an interest in its success."

Mary laid her hand gently on his arm as she gazed softly, mournfully in his face, till large tears glistened in her beautiful hazel eyes. At length, with an effort, she said, half sobbing: "No, no, Mr. Parker; your meaning may be intended for kindness, but it makes me grieve; I can never forget him who is gone, nor can any one ever have his place with me. Yet I know I will need counsel and advice. You and Mr. Trenk were his best friends; be the same to me. You will have him in mind when I may want your assistance: for whom should I trust more than the friends he trusted?"

The same evening Walter's mother had invited some of her circle to spend a few hours quietly around her. The young, witty Mrs. Walters, the pretty Mrs. Malcomb, Helen Nevil, Emma Gray, and Claudia were there with three or four more beauties.

Pactolus being in town, brought Mr. Dace, and Anthon entered with some other youthful gentlemen. Claudia hoped in her soul that Nathan would come: but he did not make his appearance. Walter was in full glory with so many of his lady admirers, who were all in some trepidation, it is true, lest he might make them the pleasing subject of his erratic fancy. They knew his foible, and duly watched him to enjoy whatever entertainment he might afford in the way of amusement, piously praying it would not be at their expense.

But Mr. Parker was on his good behavior, being at home with Emma at his side. He was bound under these heavy penalties to keep the peace, if he could—which the ladies thought doubtful. They were, however, delighted with each charming hour as it flew rapidly away. Walter had suc-



ceeded to his own satisfaction in pleasing every one. Never had he been more sprightly, more fluent, fanciful, or more varied in his ludicrous topics. With several around him, he was in the full tide of enjoyment, as, taking up a remark made by some one, he replied: "Dust to dust is our normal condition. But if it were to read gold dust to gold dust, it would suit our commercial existence in this Christian age. When people throw dust in your eyes, you may be sure it is not of a yellow color. Yet it is most astonishing how often those who raise the cloud, if they accumulate nuggets, become near-sighted towards others who, less fortunate, keep on in the way-train of life. Ophthalmia is the rich man's malady, with a sudden attack coming on whenever needy friends have the impudence to cross the retina of his vision. This will account for premature blindness before grey hairs need dyeing."

Hereupon Pactolus inquired if this deprivation of sight were not the great obstacle to rich men passing through the eye of a certain needle read of in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, or some other book.

"Probably the eye of that needle," Walter remarked, "has a cataract in it, and one as difficult to navigate as the celebrated cataract of the Nile, into which Egypt has been throwing dust since the days of Cheops."

Mr. Pactolus acquiesced in the truth of his important scientific discovery, promising to have it duly enrolled in the minutes at the next meeting of the Self-Sacrificing Association for the Advancement of Talking.

"Let me suggest to thee, sage son of Lydia," said Walter; "let me suggest to thee, veritable offspring of the very green Timolus, to send it to the Antiquarian Society, since your needle of *Pilgrim's Progress*, or some other book, has



been lost in a haystack of learning. But now the Rev. Mr. Mellowtone has been tugging away at the Hebrew, with a Hosetonac tunnel perseverance, and has found for rich men a gate of donkey-size aperture, about their photographic capacity, where they may pass, provided their money-bags are not checked through. Doctor Brimson, however, is still hunting for the needle in the haystack."

"'Tis a consolation," said Mr. Dace, "and will save many a death-bed repentance."

"Which are now on the increase," Walter added. "It was but yesterday Madam Raquetaque was inconsolable for the exit of the Lady Dowager, before the tender-hearted madam had made her peace with Nathan. She never would have repented of her shocking conduct to him had the old lady lived. I told Raquetaque it was a clear case of death-bed repentance, but tried to comfort her with the remark that there was many a music stool with a fair penitent on it to keep her company."

"I learn, Mr. Parker," said Mrs. Walters, "we are about to lose our fortunate friend. They say he is engaged. Is it so—can any one tell?"

All eyes were turned upon Emma, who blushed crimson at this appeal to disclose the first secret imparted to her keeping by a brother. Claudia gazed upon her with an eager stare of anxious inquiry, which, fortunately, none observed except Walter; who, in order to relieve the embarrassment of his affianced, took upon himself to answer:

"I suppose, from your inquiry, it is no longer a secret; therefore I may say he has been engaged for some time. Tomorrow he goes south to visit his lady."

Claudia had not removed her eyes from Emma's counte-



nance, who suddenly screaming from sudden fright, fainted, and fell into the arms of Helen Nevil. All ran immediately to Emma's assistance. It was many minutes before she became conscious and composed. She declined making any explanation, but requested to be taken home.

After serving as her escort, Walter returned to find his mother seated alone in the library waiting his arrival, for her company were gone. She was impatient for some explanation of the fainting scene, while Walter was in equal haste to draw his boots. When pulling and kicking with his patent-leathers, he imparted to his mother some knowledge of the fatal picture which has already been described, in Claudia's family. "Emma was much better," said he in continuation, "when she joined Nathan, who, like a good soul, gave her much comfort. He listened attentively to Claudia's marvellous change of countenance when appearing in the character of the old Colonial Colonel. Oh, mother! what a grim visage she put on, pale as a ghost, and fierce as a dead Indian in war-paint. It was the picture of her old grandfather's phiz, with all his despairing rage. No wonder Emma was horrified at the appalling spectacle. Nathan understood it all in a moment, from which I infer he has some time seen Claudia going through the same scalping-knife performance; never solicited, however, for a second exhibition by particular request. Such private theatricals are a little too perpendicular for domestic purposes."

"Why, my son, did you not stay longer with Emma?"

"I remained as long as possible. But Nathan was exerting himself to console her, and hinted at the beneficial effects of my speedy departure: coupled with some considerations for the welfare of my maternal parent, much more compliment-



ary to the mamma than courteous to her first-born. We agreed, however, before I left, to say nothing of Claudia's new style of features, not adapted to the present fashions, since, most fortunately for the lady, we only witnessed the play—the pale distortion rather—of her countenance. If Nathan cannot quiet Emma's nerves, he will send for the old nurse Rosey, who will come in all haste, if it be only hinted Emma requires her assistance."

It might be three or four years thereafter, in a hot day in summer, poor Rosey, in her solitary home, was sick with headache and a burning fever. A carriage drove up to the door, and she, almost unconscious, was borne to it in the arms of some one. Resting on the bosom of the person at her side, she fell asleep from exhaustion as she was driven through the streets. When awaking, she was reposing on a cool, downy bed in a beautiful apartment, a lovely little lady seated near with a soft hand on Rosey's throbbing brow. The kind lady gave her some drink, refreshing, cold as ice, to assuage her burning thirst, and felt her pulse, smoothed her pillow, once more to place to her lips the pleasant cold liquid. The fever was gone, but the poor sufferer was too feeble to rise. A gentleman was there holding some fresh culled roses, with a small basket of ox-heart cherries.

A beautiful boy, more than two years old, came running into the sick-room after his mamma. When told not to make a noise, he pushed a chair to the bed and climbed up to kiss the poor invalid. He crawled up to her lips and patted her wan cheek. He kissed her again, and said he would love her better than his nurse who had gone away. He nestled in her bosom and fell asleep on her arm.



"Emma, dear Emma," murmured Rosey, "this is a dream, a delicious dream to make me well. For once, your dear mother and father hung over me, as you are now helping me. In my gratitude I then prayed to God for permission some time to repay their goodness, and He heard the prayer of the poor German immigrant girl."

THE END.











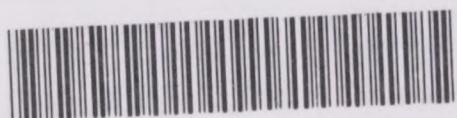








LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00022956115